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424

CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

RELATIONS OF THE PRINCIPALITIES

TO

TURKEY,

AND THEIR

RIGHT TO CONCLUDE TREATIES

WITH

FOREIGN POWERS.

33

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Correspondence respecting the Relations of the Principalities to Turkey, and their Right to conclude Treaties with Foreign Powers.

No. 1.

Sir H. Elliot to Earl Granville.—(Received December 12.)

(No. 428.)

My Lord, *Therapia, November* 28, 1873.

MR. GREEN has forwarded to your Lordship a copy of a letter from the Roumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs respecting Conventions between the United Principalities and foreign Powers, and containing a list of those which had of late years been concluded.

It may not be inopportune to call to mind that, while some of these were under discussion, Her Majesty's Government expressed a very strong opinion that their conclusion would be contrary to the position secured by Treaty to the Principalities, and an infringement of the sovereign rights of the Porte.

Mr. Green has remarked to your Lordship that Firmans, although not formally repudiated, have long since ceased to be quoted at Bucharest as affecting the privileges of the Principalities, but it would almost appear that the same might be said of the engagements solemnly taken by Prince Charles.

Nothing could be more explicit than the terms in which it was announced by the Porte that the Firman of Investiture would be granted upon certain conditions, of which one was that the Prince should conclude no Treaties or Conventions with foreign Powers, although he might make private arrangements with them upon matters of local interest.

In October 1866, Prince Charles pledged himself to the observance of those conditions by a letter to Aali Pasha, then Grand Vizier; and if M. Boeresco is now able to give a list of formal Conventions since concluded by the Principalities, it offers a striking contrast between His Highness' engagements and his subsequent acts.

The excuse for the Prince is no doubt to be found in the readiness shown by some Governments to assist him in weakening the ties by which it had been thought desirable to attach the Principalities to the Porte, but this policy has prepared the way for difficulties of which we have not yet seen the end.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 2.

Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville.—(Received December 29.)

(No. 442. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Berlin, December* 22, 1873.

PRINCE BISMARCK tells me that he has been very much surprised at hearing from Constantinople that the Turkish Government appear not to object to the independence of Roumania although they are unwilling to admit the independence of Servia.

This "standpoint" the Chancellor says is so new to him that he has caused

nquiries to be made at London, Paris, Vienna, and St. Petersburgh, as to the nformation received from Constantinople on the subject, and how it is viewed by the Great Powers.

I asked what his own wishes were in regard to the Principalities? Prince Bismarck replied that the independence of Roumania was a matter of indifference to him, although hitherto he had found it inconvenient to make the Turkish Government responsible for the acts of her dependencies.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 3.

Earl Granville to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 3. Confidential.)
Foreign Office, January 3, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 442 of the 22nd ultimo, reporting that Prince Bismarck had heard that the Turkish Government would not be disinclined to admit the independence of Roumania, but that they would be unwilling to do so in the case of Servia.

With reference to this statement I have to observe that I have received no information which would induce me to believe it to be correct; on the contrary, the Porte has but recently complained of the Principalities entering into separate Conventions with foreign Powers without the consent of the Sultan.

I inclose a copy of Sir H. Elliot's despatch on this latter point.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) GRANVILLE.

No. 3 A.

Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 18.)
Berlin, January 9, 1874.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 3 of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to state that I told Prince Bismarck that your Lordship had received no information to induce you to think that the Turkish Government would not be disinclined to admit the independence of Roumania.

Prince Bismarck replied that he had received none either from Roumania which could induce him to alter his opinion as to the desirability of maintaining the suzerainty of the Porte over that Principality as heretofore.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 3 B.

Mr. Ffrench to Earl Granville.—(Received January 19.)

(No. 5. Confidential.)
Vienna, January 15, 1874.

My Lord,

COUNT ANDRASSY returned to Vienna the night before last, and received me this morning.

I inquired of his Excellency whether he had received any news, either from Berlin or Constantinople, respecting the projects for Roumanian independence, in the sense mentioned in your Lordship's despatch No. 2, Confidential, of the 7th instant. He said that he had heard nothing that could lead him to suppose that there was any intention on the part of either Prince Charles, or of his Government, to attempt to assert their independence of the Turkish suzerainty in any way that would not be in conformity with the conditions insured by Treaties. That with regard to separate Conventions with neighbouring States, they were justified in making them; and he did not see that there was anything in their present conduct to justify the complaints of the Porte.

He added, that he knew positively that no attempt on their part to assert their

* No. 1.

complete independence would be supported by Prince Bismarck, to whom the fact of a Hohenzollern occupying the Throne of Roumania was a matter of perfect indifference, and whom he in nowise considered as a Prussian Prince.

Count Andrassy would see no particular objection to the independence of Roumania, provided that it met with the consent of the Porte and of the guaranteeing Powers, save insomuch as it would give rise to a precedent which would be speedily followed by Servia, Montenegro, and the other States under the suzerainty of the Porte, and thus reopen the Eastern question.

With regard to the Turkish Government, while perfectly content with the present state of his relations with it, he said that they were like children, perpetually running from one to the other Power for protection, showing the disregard for truth, which proceeds from timidity, and generally stumbling between everybody's legs; and he thought, from information he had received, that on more than one occasion they had told unwarrantable stories to, and had deceived, Sir Henry Elliot.

The position of Austria in Turkey, he said, had become particularly good, on account of the suicidal policy followed out by General Ignatiew, which, he said, had been purely personal, or at least that he had been assured it was so by Prince Gortchakow, when his Excellency came to Vienna last summer. The result of this policy has been the complete loss of the influence which Russia hitherto possessed over the whole of the Christian population belonging to the Greek Church in the East, by whom she is now universally hated, that they consequently now look to Austria as a Power whose frank and straightforward policy, more passive than demonstrative, offers them surer and safer guarantees.

He seemed to regret, and indeed expressed it, that in a general way there should not be a closer connection ("entente") with regard to the general policy of Austria and Great Britain, not with particular reference to any special subject or country, but as regards their general and mutual interests in Europe and in the East; not exactly an alliance, but an identity of interests, which might serve to counterbalance others in the scale.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. PERCY FFRENCH.

No. 4.

Mr. Locock to Earl Granville.—(Received January 19.)

(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, January 19, 1874.

THE Austrian Minister, last Saturday, expostulated with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, in angry terms, on behalf of Count Andrassy, about the Turkish Circular in reference to the right of the Danubian Principalities to appoint Diplomatic Agents. Should the Porte abide by its Circular, Count Andrassy would ignore it, having promised Prince Milan Obrenovitch to support his wishes. Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that such a promise could not bind the Porte, which would not recede. The above was communicated to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in strict confidence.

No. 5.

Lord A. Loftus to Earl Granville.—(Received January 23.)

(No. 15.)
St. Petersburgh, January 17, 1874.

My Lord,

AT a late interview with Prince Gortchakow I inquired whether he had received any information in regard to certain reports that the Turkish Government were not indisposed to grant the independence of Roumania, although unwilling to agree to the independence of Servia.

His Highness replied that a report of this nature had reached him, but that he placed no credence in it, nor had he any reason to believe that the Porte entertained any such intentions.

His Highness expressed his disapproval of any attempts to disturb the present arrangements in regard to the Vassal States of Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 6.

Lord Odo Russell to Earl Granville.—(Received February 16.)

(No. 80.)
My Lord, *Berlin, February 13, 1874.*

M. NICHOLAS KRETZULESKO, the newly-appointed Roumanian Agent at Berlin, whom I had formerly known at Constantinople, called on me to-day, and told me, in the course of conversation, that the object of his mission was to obtain the recognition of the right of Roumania to negotiate Commercial Treaties independently of Turkey, who had "denounced" her Commercial Treaties with other nations, thereby exposing the future interests of the Danubian Principalities to great dangers, which it was the duty of the Roumanian Government to guard against without loss of time. He had not come to object to the suzerainty of the Porte, or the tribute, or to claim the right of concluding Political Treaties; he had merely come to advocate the right of the Roumanians in regard to their own commercial intercourse with other nations.

I told M. Kretzulesko that he would not meet with any encouragement on the part of Prince Bismarck, whom I knew to be contrary to any change in regard to the position of the Principalities towards the Suzerain Power.

M. Kretzulesko replied that he had been most kindly received by the Chancellor in presenting his credentials to him, but that I was right in thinking that he had not as yet met with any encouragement beyond an exhortation to patience.

He had been promised an audience of the Emperor as soon as His Majesty was well enough to receive him, but he had already been presented to the Empress, and had dined with Her Majesty last night.

I have since been told that M. Kretzulesko, having declined to adhere to the rule according to which Roumanian Agents formed part of the staff of, and were presented at Court by the Turkish Minister, he would not be admitted to a diplomatic position, but would be received as a "foreigner of distinction" at Court.

M. Kretzulesko is the bearer of private letters of introduction from Prince Charles to his relations and friends at Berlin, which have already insured to him a far superior position to that of his predecessor, M. Rosetti.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 7.

Mr. Locock to Earl Granville.—(Received February 18.)

(No. 24.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, February 5, 1874.*

I TOOK occasion two days ago, in conversation with M. d'Eichmann, the German Minister here, to refer to the surprise which had been expressed by Prince Bismarck to Lord Odo Russell, as mentioned in his despatch No. 442 of the 22nd December to your Lordship, at hearing from Constantinople that the Turkish Government appear not to object to the independence of Roumania, although they are unwilling to admit the independence of Servia.

His Excellency told me that the information to which the Chancellor referred had been communicated by himself after a conversation he had had with Raschid Pasha, who certainly expressed himself in the sense reported. Prince Bismarck having subsequently expressed a doubt as to his having correctly caught the meaning of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, he had, on a recent occasion, recalled the precise words to the recollection of his Excellency, who had admitted their accuracy.

Thinking it advisable to learn for certain whether any change had occured in the views of the Turkish Government on so important a question, I referred to the matter yesterday in a conversation with Raschid Pasha himself. His Excellency appeared to me to regret that so much importance should have been attached to his words, which he assured me meant no more than this, that if Roumania were the only vassal Province of the Empire, and if Servia and, in connection with Servia, Bosnia did not happen to exist alongside of it, the Porte would not be unwilling to admit its independence; but as Roumania does not happen to stand alone, the Porte does and will continue to oppose any attempt to sever its existing connection with the Empire. His Excellency pointed to the recent Memorandum of the Porte as illustrating its policy on this question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SIDNEY LOCOCK.

No. 8.

Mr. Green to Earl Granville.—(Received February 23.)

(No. 12.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, February 13, 1874.*

THE article in the "Monitorul," of which I had the honour to furnish your Lordship with a translation in my despatch No. 10 of the 11th instant, has been reproduced in the semi-official "Journal de Bucarest," together with an article on the attempts which are alleged to have been made at Berlin by the Roumanian Government in order to obtain the support of Prince Bismarck in favour of the independence of the Principalities. I have the honour to inclose both these articles.

As was to be expected, the agitation of such questions, and especially that of the abdication of Prince Charles, by the official press, has been immediately taken up by opposition newspapers. The "Roumanul" publishes a letter which it pretends to have received in original by the local post. This letter it says was addressed from Bucharest by a M. Catargi, the Secretary of the Prefect of Vlasca, to his chief, giving him the news of the capital. After alluding to various reports about the Ministry and the Chambers he says: "It is also reported that His Highness the Prince, our climate agreeing neither with him nor the Princess, is about to abdicate in favour of his brother, and since it is necessary that the heir should be married to a Roumanian, one has been found in the person of Miss F———. As if it were likely that, after a sojourn of eight years, they should have discovered that the climate was unhealthy!"

The "Roumanul" pretends to consider that this M. Catargi must have obtained the information from his relative and protector, the Prime Minister. It is more than probable, however, that these rumours have no foundation whatever. But the weak health of the Princess, which she attributes to the climate, and the former threatened abdication of Prince Charles unless his position were improved, lend a certain colour to any idle speculations on these subjects. Prince Frederick of Hohenzollern is still here. The young lady to whom the "Roumanul" is pleased to affiance him is a daughter of General Floresco, the Minister of War, and grand-daughter of the late reigning Prince Bibesco.

It is to be regretted that the restless activity of M. Boeresco, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, should cause these useless and mischievous discussions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. GREEN.

Inclosure in No. 8.

Extract from the "Journal de Bucarest" of February 12, 1874.

BRUITS D'ABDICATION.—QUELQUES journaux étrangers ont considéré le voyage en Roumanie du Prince Frederic de Hohenzollern comme une sorte de préparation à sa succession au Trône. Nous avons fait observer qu'aucune préparation de ce genre n'est nécessaire, les conditions de l'hérédité étant très-explicitement déterminées dans la Constitution même de l'Etat Roumain. Des journaux locaux ont cru voir dans ce simple exposé des faits une intention qu'aurait dès à présent le Prince Charles de se retirer dans la vie privée et de laisser le Trône à son frère. Le Gouvernement a jugé à propos de démentir officiellement ces hypothèses absolument gratuites. Voici la note qu'il a fait insérer au "Moniteur:"

"Le journal 'Poporul' et d'autres feuilles, locales et étrangères, ont cherché à répandre des insinuations qui n'ont pas besoin d'être qualifiées. Ils ont dit que le Prince Régnant songerait à se retirer dans la vie privée, que le Gouvernement s'occupe de la vacance du Trône et autres inventions pareilles, aussi indignes que non fondées.

"Ces bruits absurdes ne peuvent être que l'effet de manœuvres déloyales de la part de ceux à qui déplait la stabilité qu'ils voient se fortifier de jour en jour davantage sur le territoire Roumain, et qui sont désespérés des liens de très-sincère affection qui existent entre la nation et son Souverain."

LES GENS BIEN INFORMÉS.—Nous empruntons ce qui suit à la "Correspondance générale Autrichienne:"—

"On écrit de Berlin à une feuille de Prague:

"On vous disait l'autre jour dans une correspondance de Bucarest que le Gouvernement du Prince paraîtrait disposé à solliciter notre Cabinet de prendre le rôle de protecteur dont Napoléon III s'était chargé vis-à-vis de la Roumanie. Notre correspondant était bien informé, seulement il se trompe relativement à l'époque. Ce qu'il annonce comme devant avoir lieu appartient déjà au domaine de l'histoire. Et en effet, lors de la mission de M. Cretzoulesco, le Gouvernement Roumain avait déjà tenté de gagner le Prince de Bismarck pour qu'il usât de sa puissante influence pour appuyer ses aspirations à l'indépendance. L'accueil fait à ces propositions doit avoir été de nature à désillusionner complétement le Gouvernement Roumain, voire même à l'abasourdir. Le Prince de Bismarck, qui très-probablement a en ce moment à s'occuper de bien d'autres affaires, déclina ces prétentions de manière à faire comprendre catégoriquement qu'il n'est rien moins que disposé à favoriser certaines illusions desquelles on semble se bercer à Bucarest. Il ne manqua pas non plus de donner au Gouvernement Roumain le charitable avis de bien se garder de toute entreprise aventureuse et de ne point provoquer un conflit diplomatique avec la Porte Ottomane. Il paraît que ces conseils ont été suivis à Bucarest: c'est du moins dans ce sens qu'est conçue la dernière déclaration du Ministère M. Boéresco, déclaration par laquelle il a répondu à une interpellation qui lui avait été adressée sur la politique extérieure."

Le correspondant bien informé de la feuille de Prague se trompe seulement sur ceci:

1. M. Cretzoulesco n'a pas été envoyé en mission spéciale à Berlin. Il est accrédité en qualité d'Agent permanent près le Gouvernement Impérial, et il a reçu, à ce titre, l'accueil le plus flatteur.

2. Le Gouvernement Roumain n'a pas eu à solliciter la protection exclusive de l'Empereur Guillaume, pas plus qu'il ne jouit jadis d'une protection exclusive de l'Empereur Napoléon III. La Roumanie est placée, en vertu des Traités, sous la protection collective des grandes Puissances. Cela lui suffit.

3. La Roumanie ne se berce d'aucunes illusions relativement à son indépendance. Cette indépendance, elle la possède en fait, et les Traités que nous rappelions plus haut la lui ont reconnue en droit.

4. La Roumanie n'a besoin des charitables avis de personne pour savoir qu'elle n'a aucun intérêt à créer des conflits entre elle et la Sublime Porte. Elle respecte les droits des autres comme elle entend que l'on respecte les siens. Voilà tout.

5. La dernière déclaration de M. Boéresco à la Chambre des Députés a été purement et simplement la répétition de ce qu'il avait dit au début de la session; elle n'a donc pu être provoquée par aucun fait nouveau.

Sauf ces légères rectifications, les renseignements du correspondant du journal de Prague sont tout-à-fait exacts.

No. 9.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 22. Most Confidential.)

Foreign Office, February 26, 1874.

Sir,

THE Austro-Hungarian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon by appointment, and in an interview of considerable length, expressed his earnest desire that the Government of Great Britain and of Austria should maintain a good understanding, and as far as possible act in unison on all questions, especially those connected with the East. He defined the policy of Austria, in regard to Turkey, as being one which endeavoured to combine the maintenance of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire with the promotion of all such administrative reforms as might be desirable for the well-being of the Christian populations under Turkish rule. He thought the Austrian Government had in past times looked too exclusively to the maintenance of order, and had ignored the impossibility of maintaining order without conciliating these populations. He knew nothing, he said, of any intention on the part of the Government which he represented to revive the Eastern question, nor did he believe that such intentions existed. He was anxious that the Government of England should express itself strongly and decidedly on questions of this kind, when they arose, believing that in our so doing, lay the best hope of peace being preserved.

Count Beust then referred, but in general terms, to the question of the Suez Canal, and to the financial condition of Turkey. He seemed to wish that foreign

Powers could put some check on the extravagance of the Turkish authorities which, if uncontrolled, must shortly end in bankruptcy.

I said, in reply, that I agreed with him as to the condition of Turkish finance, but that I did not see how foreign Powers could interfere to put it on a better footing. A commission of foreign representatives, united to give advice on financial questions (which was the remedy I understood him to suggest), appeared to me either useless or dangerous, unless, if, as was probable, its action were to be nullified by the natural jealousy of the Turkish authorities; dangerous, if it drew to itself the management of the finances of the Empire, and thus virtually obtained a control over every branch of administration. In this view, after a little discussion, Count Beust appeared to concur.

As to the Suez Canal, I was compelled to say that, only four days having elapsed since I had first an opportunity of making myself acquainted with questions pending in this office, I had not been able to read the papers bearing on the subject, and was, therefore, unprepared to discuss it.

With regard to Eastern matters generally, I told Count Beust, that I knew as yet but little of the position in which they stood; that I agreed with him in his two leading propositions, first, that the integrity of Turkey should be maintained, and next, that no reasonable cause of complaint affecting the Christian populations under Turkish authority should be allowed to subsist, but that on this latter point it was necessary to speak with great reserve, since we both knew that in all countries complaints of political grievances were frequently put forward with objects very different from those which their authors thought fit to avow.

He might be assured, I said, that Her Majesty's Government would at all times be ready to communicate freely with that of which he was the representative, and that it would give me sincere pleasure to find that we were able to act together. In any case, he might rely on the most entire frankness on my part. England had no object except the maintenance of European peace, and such, as it seemed to me, was also the natural policy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

It is right to add to the above, first, that what I have set down is a brief and very imperfect summary of a long conversation, and next, that I did not understand Count Beust to be speaking officially, but rather to be indicating what he personally supposed to be the views of his Government, and endeavoured to elicit mine.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 10.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 9.)

(No. 27. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Vienna, March* 5, 1874.

I HAVE reason to believe that M. Costoforo, the Roumanian Agent here, has lately expressed, confidentially, a wish to be acknowledged as a member of the Diplomatic Body, and has asked how the Government would meet a declaration of independence on the part of the Principalities.

With respect to the first point, if I am correctly informed, he has been told that, while the Treaty of Paris remains in force, no diplomatic representative of the Principalities can be received at Vienna. And that in the event of the Roumanian Government endeavouring to set aside the stipulations of the Treaty, by which the Principalities are recognized as dependencies of the Ottoman Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Government would consider with the other Powers who are parties to the Treaty what measures it might be expedient to adopt in consequence of these Provinces thus forfeiting the protection of the European guarantees which they at present enjoy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 11.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received March 21.)

(No. 293. Very Confidential.)

Paris, March 20, 1874.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes spoke to me very confidentially this afternoon of the visit of the Emperor of Austria to Russia.

He told me that he regarded it with great satisfaction, and that it appeared to him to foreshadow a return to the system of concert and, so to speak, of equality between the Powers of Europe, which had been abandoned since the triumph of Germany over France.

In the first place, he observed that the union between the three European Empires had been originally formed under the auspices and the Presidency of Prince Bismarck, who had not only given it an exclusive character, but, as was the way with Presidents, had reserved to himself a double vote. Now, the recent interview between the Emperors of Austria and Russia had taken place without the intervention of Prince Bismarck, and independently of his influence. It was, of course, he said, not to be expected, under present circumstances, that France should be pointedly referred to as a member of the European concert, but he had observed with great pleasure that England had been very prominently put forward as one of the Powers on whom the maintenance of peace depended. The union had thus, he conceived, been extended from three Powers to four, and this he held to be a great advantage.

The Duc Decazes went on to say that he could not believe that the Eastern Question had not been mentioned by the two Emperors, although he did not at all suppose that a scheme for the partition of Turkey had been discussed, as some newspapers pretended.

From the information he had received, he thought it probable that the independence of Roumania had been spoken of, and that little or no objection had been made to it on either side. He did not appear to attach any very great importance to this question himself. He said that he understood that Austria had expressed her willingness to negotiate a Treaty of Commerce directly with Roumania, and that Russia considered that there would be nothing objectionable in this. For his own part, he could not, he told me, but admit that it was unreasonable to suppose that commercial questions affecting Roumania could be properly treated by the Porte at Constantinople. He was, indeed, of opinion that the Porte would show diplomatic skill by gracefully offering, of its own accord, to allow Roumania to make her own commercial arrangements with her neighbours: and he thought that its recent proposal to modify its commercial Treaties with the Powers of Europe, might afford a natural opportunity of making spontaneously this concession to the vassal Principalities.

I observed, that the special question of the Turkish Commercial Treaties and their enforcement in Roumania was a complicated one, in which the Great European Powers, as well Turkey and her dependent Principalities, were interested. Speaking generally, I said that I had always been of opinion that the prudent course for Turkey was to make her suzerainty as little irksome and inconvenient as possible, in practice, to the Principalities; but that I thought, nevertheless, that Servia and Roumania, and the latter especially, would lose so much in security by severing their connection with the Ottoman Empire, that they would find any gratification of their vanity, or any advantage to their material interests which they might derive from acquiring their independence, to be very dearly purchased.

The Duke said that no doubt their annexation to one or other of the neighbouring Christian Empires would become a very much simpler question if they became independent States, relying only on their own unguaranteed rights.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

No. 12.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 13.)

(No. 72. Confidential.)

Vienna, April 9, 1874.

My Lord,

IN a recent conversation with Count Andrassy, I took occasion to observe, with reference to the appointment of Roumanian or Servian Agents to foreign Courts, that, in reply to questions put to your Lordship on the subject, you had stated that you saw no reason to change the policy hitherto followed by Her Majesty's Government with respect to it, and that such persons could, therefore, only be received in England if presented by the Turkish Ambassador. I said to his Excellency at the same time that you held the sanction of the Porte to be necessary to make Treaties binding, which might be concluded by the principalities; and that you had mentioned as a parallel case a negotiation in which Her Majesty's Minister at Washington is at present engaged, and in which, as it affects the interests of Canada, he would be assisted by a Commissioner from that Colony.

Count Andrassy did not consider the cases analogous, as he said Canada had not an hereditary Ruler, and was an integral part of the British Empire; and I answered that the Turkish vassal Provinces were equally integral parts of the Ottoman Empire; and that Canada had not only its own Government and military establishments, but was financially independent of Great Britain, having no tribute to pay to the Imperial Treasury.

His Excellency having subsequently asked whether your Lordship had expressed any opinion respecting the Turkish Commercial Treaties, I said that I was not aware what your views might be on the general question, but that with respect to the wishes of the vassal Provinces to make independent arrangements, I believed that you thought, as a general principle, the Porte should make her Suzerainty as little irksome to the Provinces as possible, while it would be impolitic on their part to weaken their connection with Turkey, by which their territory and autonomy are placed under the guarantee of the great Powers of Europe.

Count Andrassy said he entirely agreed with your Lordship as to the importance of that guarantee being maintained, but he thought it could only be abrogated by the Principalities declaring their independence; and that it was open to discussion whether the liberty of commerce secured to them did not cover the right to make fiscal arrangements with neighbouring States in the same manner that the municipality of a town can impose "octroi" duties on articles of consumption brought within its gates.

Your Lordship will probably consider that there is no analogy in the cases, as a right to levy octroi duties must, I presume, be specially granted by the Sovereign; but I mention the observation as an illustration of his Excellency's opinions on the subject. He said, however, that the question would be considered in its various bearings, and he hoped that some expedient might be found to reconcile the Sovereign rights of the Sultan with the interests of the principalities and those of their neighbours.

With respect to the general question of the Turkish Commercial Treaties, the Austro-Hungarian Government considers itself to be in an exceptional position, as no provision has been made for the revision of its existing arrangements with the Porte; but it is disposed, I believe, to listen favourably to any reasonable proposals which may be made for promoting the welfare of Turkey.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 13.

Mr. Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 13.)

(No. 21.)

Bucharest, April 4, 1874.

My Lord,

"A collection of Treaties and Conventions between Roumania and Foreign Powers, from the year 1368 to the present time," has just been published here by Mr. Mitilineu, the Secretary-General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

This work, which is in Roumanian, bears on the title page the following French motto: "Le droit de conclure un Traité, d'engager la foi publique à l'égard d'un

Gouvernement étranger, est incontestablement un des attributs de la souveraineté. Comte de Garden."

M. Mitilineu dedicates his book to Prince Charles I; and, "in lieu of introduction," reproduces M. Boerescо's note to the foreign Agents at Bucharest, dated the $\frac{3}{15}$ November last, of which I had the honour to transmit a copy in my despatch No. 59 of the 15th of the same month.

The collection is divided into two parts, the first of which includes Treaties and Conventions concluded from 1368 to 1857; and the second, those concluded between 1857 and 1874.

In the first part appears a Treaty of Commerce said to have been contracted in 1588 between Peter, Prince of Moldavia, and William Harcborne, Queen Elizabeth's Ambassador to the Porte.

This part also contains the capitulations with the Sultans Bajazet I, Mahomet II, Selim I, and Soliman II, referred to in the IInd Article of the Convention of Paris of 1858. To the latter of these capitulations, M. Mitilineu attaches the following note: "With regard to the date and the Sovereigns who concluded this Treaty, there is a divergence of opinion between the Roumanian historians Ureche, Cantemizu, Nicolas Costinu, and the foreign authors Muragea d'Ohsou, Hammer, and Chalcondyle. But if we quote the date and the Contracting Sovereigns, according to the foreign authors, the cause is that we wish to maintain with respect to this Treaty, as also with reference to the three others of the years 1391, 1460, and 1511, the dates recognized and consecrated by the Congress of Paris."

The second part of the collection principally consists of extradition, postal and telegraphic Conventions, and includes the Consular Convention with Russia (1869), and the Convention with Austria for the junction of the Hungarian and Roumanian Railways (1872), which the Bucharest Chambers refused to ratify.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. GREEN.

No. 14.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 58.)
Foreign Office, April 14, 1874.

Sir,

I APPROVE the language used by your Excellency, as reported in your despatch No. 72 Confidential of the 9th instant, in your conversation with Count Andrassy, respecting the policy of the appointment of Persian or Roumanian Agents to foreign Courts.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 15.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 1. Confidential.)
Bucharest, April 18, 1874.

My Lord,

I SAW M. Boerescо, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, for the first time to-day. He received me cordially and spoke with frankness, saying that the Prince and his Government had been gratified by the appointment of an agent who had served in the Foreign Office, and who came here without prejudices in favour of Turkey or against the Principalities. He hoped and thought that Her Majesty's Government might be led to appreciate better their political and commercial wants and the important connection between them.

The Principalities had no desire whatever to sacrifice the collective guarantee of all the great Powers, to which he attached the greatest importance, for a nominal independence resting upon the protection of a single Power; but he thought his country should be allowed to make her own commercial arrangements unfettered by the Porte,

who did not understand her wants and only threw difficulties and obstacles in the way. In view of the existing law against the establishment of Mussulmen in the Principalities, which however unjust and impolitic, was still in force, how was it possible that the Turks could have any knowledge of the commercial requirements of the Principalities? And yet it was expected, particularly by England, that the Porte should manage their commercial affairs for them! The question of the rights of the Principalities in this respect turned upon the interpretation of Treaties; and the Principalities held that by their spirit, at all events, they were at liberty to make these arrangements for themselves.

I reminded M. Boerescо that England had always shown herself consistently favourable to the good government of the Principalities, and had greatly contributed towards placing them in their present favourable position, the material advantages of which might easily be lost by grasping at the shadow of an independence which afterwards they might find difficult to retain; I said that Her Majesty's Government could only look to the stipulations of Treaties and to the arrangements resulting from them, as their guide in dealing with the relations between the Suzerain Power and the Principalities, and that I believed the views of your Lordship to be that the collective guarantee secured to them by Treaty would lapse with any such breach of its provisions as the separation of the Principalities from Turkey. I added, that England, taking a strictly impartial view of the relations between Turkey and the Principalities, only desired to see the interests of both countries blended and their material welfare promoted. He acknowledged the truth of this, and said that the Roumanians would sacrifice much to retain the friendship of England and the collective guarantee, which gave them greater security than any other possible arrangement, but he still hoped that Her Majesty's Government might be led to look more favourably upon their desire to free their commercial negotiations from Turkish interference, if their wishes and difficulties were properly explained.

We then spoke about the position of the Jews in the two Principalities, and I told M. Boerescо that great interest was taken in England in the fate of the Jews, who, it was generally believed, were systematically persecuted. This, he said, was an exaggeration, as there was no systematic persecution of the Jews now, but there was no doubt that for political motives a cry against them had been got up from time time which had aroused fanatical feelings.

He prided himself on being one of those who had always resisted such intolerance, which he thought unworthy of a people professing to be civilized; time and progress in civilization would however, he was convinced, work a complete change, and he would only ask for a little patience from more civilized nations.

The Liquor Law, he said, was not solely directed against the Jews but against all foreigners indiscriminately; but considering it unjust, and believing that the measure would not work well, the Government meant to propose either its abrogation or postponement (I am not quite certain which he said) at the next meeting of the Assembly, and, as he trusted, with success. M. Boerescо then asked me to give him a copy of your Lordship's letter to the Prince. In reading it he shrugged his shoulders at the reference to the Ottoman Porte and at the passage describing the Principalities as "the territories governed by your Highness," passages which he thought might have been omitted with advantage; but he said the Prince would probably be able to receive me on Monday next.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 16.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 26.)

(No. 13.)
Bucharest, May 13, 1874.

My Lord,

HAVING stated in a previous despatch that the two Principalities, now united and forming Roumania, base their claims to complete and independent autonomy upon their ancient Treaties and Capitulations with the Porte, as confirmed by the Treaty of Paris of 1856, and especially by the 2nd Article of the Convention of August 1858, it

is my duty to report to your Lordship the text of these Treaties as it is cited by the Roumanians.

The Treaties are those of 1391 between Mircea I, Prince of Wallachia, and the Sultan Bajazet I; of 1460 between Vlad V, Prince of Wallachia, and the Sultan Mohammed II; of 1511 between Bogdan, Prince of Moldavia, and the Sultan Selim I; and of 1529 between Rareseh, Prince of Moldavia, and the Sultan Solyman the Magnificent. In the 1st Article of the Treaty of 1391 the Sultan says:—

"Par notre grande clémence nous consentons que la Principauté nouvellement soumise par notre force invincible se gouverne d'après ses propres lois, et que le Prince de Valachie ait le droit de faire la guerre et la paix et celui de vie et de mort sur ses sujets."

In the Treaty of 1460, Article I:—

"Le Sultan consent et s'engage pour lui-même et ses successeurs à protéger la Valachie et à la défendre contre tout ennemi, sans exiger autre chose que la suprématie sur la Souveraineté de cette Principauté, dont les Voïvodes seront tenus de payer à la Sublime Porte un tribut de 10,000 piastres;" and Article V states:—"La nation Valaque continuera de jouir du libre exercice de ses propres lois, et les Voïvodes auront le droit de vie et de mort sur leurs sujets, comme celui de faire la guerre et la paix, sans être soumis pour aucun de ces actes à aucune responsabilité envers la Sublime Porte."

In the Treaty of 1511, Article I:—

"La Porte s'engage à défendre la Moldavie contre toute agression éventuelle; à la maintenir dans l'état où elle se trouvait précédemment sans qu'il lui soit fait la moindre distraction de son territoire." Article IV states: "La Moldavie sera réglée et gouvernée par ses propres lois, sans que la Porte s'y ingère d'aucune manière." Article VI: "La domination des Princes s'étendra sur tout le territoire Moldave; ils pourront entretenir à leur solde une troupe armée composée d'indigènes ou étrangers." Article VIII: "Les Turcs ne pourront avoir ni acheter des terres en Moldavie; ils ne pourront non plus y bâtir ni s'y établir en aucune manière."

The Treaty of 1529 contains thirteen Articles:—

In the Ist the Sultan recognizes Moldavia as a free and unconquered country.

The IInd confirms to Moldavia all her ancient liberties, laws, customs, rights, and prerogatives without any molestation or hindrance on the part of the Porte.

The IIIrd permits the Prince freely to exercise dominion over the country without any right of interference, direct or indirect, on the part of the Porte.

In the IVth the Porte engages not to interfere, directly or indirectly, in any lawsuits, leaving them to be judged by the Prince and the Assembly.

Article V guarantees the integrity of the Moldavian frontiers.

Articles VI and VII forbid the exercise of Mussulman worship or the establishment of Mahommedans in any part of Moldavia, or even their sojourn there without the sanction of the Prince.

Article VIII throws open the commerce of Moldavia to all nations, with a preferential reservation in favour of the Porte for the purchase of the products of the country at Galatz, Ismail, and Kilia.

Article IX states: "Le titre de Pays Indépendant sera conservé à la Moldavie; il sera reproduit dans tous les écrits que la Porte Ottomane adressera au Prince."

Article X forbids the Turks from crossing the Danube on any pretext whatever. Messengers with despatches for the Prince must send them through the Governor of Galatz, and the answers must be forwarded in the same way.

Article XI provides for the election of the Princes of Moldavia by the people, and the recognition of such election by the Porte without right of nomination or of interference.

Article XII engages the Porte to defend Moldavia whenever she may demand her support or assistance; and

Article XIII states: "En retour de tous ces avantages, la nation Moldave ne donnera à la Porte Ottomane qu'un présent annuel de 4,000 ducats."

Besides these Capitulations, the Roumanians also cite Treaties with Queen Elizabeth, of 1588; with Rudolph, Emperor of Germany, of 1598; with the Prince of Transylvania, of 1655; and with the Czar, Peter the Great, of 1711; but as they are not referred to in the Convention of Paris, it is unnecessary for me to quote them. They are to be found in the annex to the pamphlet, "Les droits de la Roumanie basés sur les Traités," which I sent to your Lordship in my despatch No. 10 of the 5th instant.

The Roumanians contend that the Capitulations with the Porte which I have quoted give them rights of independent autonomy and sovereignty far beyond what are now conceded to them, including the right of direct representation abroad and of negotiating Treaties of Commerce (the right of making peace or war they admit to have been taken from them by the neutralization of the Principalities), while they maintain that the tribute they pay to the Porte is only an equivalent for protection against foreign aggression and in no way a token of vassalage.

When reminded of the Acts of Sovereignty, such as the nomination of the Hospodars, exercised by the Porte subsequently to the date of these Treaties, they reply that these Acts were a mere abuse of force which does not weaken their rights under Treaties solemnly confirmed and renewed by the Convention of Paris of 1858, and they also pointed out that, while in all cases of the conquest of a country by the Turks, their first act has been to build a mosque as a token that the country belonged to Allah; not only have they never built a mosque in the Principalities, but the Treaties expressly forbid them from doing so or from establishing themselves there.

I have given the text of these Treaties as it is quoted by the Roumanians, who allege that the originals are to be found either at Constantinople or at St. Petersburgh. The Turkish Plenipotentiaries demurred at the Conference of Paris to the accuracy of the text, but the Roumanians challenge the production of the originals, while Sir H. Bulwer, I believe, reported in 1858 that, though the documents could not be produced, he was inclined to think that their alleged contents were in the main correct.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

P.S.—I inclose a copy of the Prince's speech on the occasion of my official reception, which has been communicated to me by the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

C. V.

Inclosure in No. 16.

Speech of Prince Charles to Mr. Vivian on his Official Reception.

M. l'Agent,

VOTRE nomination comme Agent Diplomatique et Consul-Général m'a causé une véritable satisfaction, d'autant plus que venant du Foreign Office votre mission a un caractère tout particulier pour moi.

Je suis convaincu d'avance que votre présence en Roumanie contribuera beaucoup à établir avec la Grande Bretagne nos relations aussi intimes et amicales que possible, et que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine, votre auguste Souveraine, voudra bien accorder à mon pays sa haute et puissante protection en le soutenant dans ses justes aspirations.

Quant à vous, M. l'Agent, vous pouvez compter en toute circonstance sur l'appui de mon Gouvernement, qui s'empressera de vous faciliter votre mission, laquelle, je l'espère, vous la remplirez de longues années auprès de moi.

Je suis vivement touché de la sympathie que vous m'exprimez, au nom de Sa Majesté la Reine et de son Gouvernement, à l'occasion de la perte que je viens de subir; je vous en remercie sincèrement.

No. 16*.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 15.) *Bucharest, May 20, 1874.*

My Lord,

M. MARINOVICH, the Prime Minister of Servia, who accompanied the Prince to Constantinople and, I believe, advised his journey there called upon me to day.

It was not difficult to get him to talk upon the subject which was evidently nearest his thoughts; namely, the ill-success of his Prince's journey to Constantinople.

He spoke bitterly of the manner in which the Prince had been "duped" there after loyally undertaking to perform an act of homage, with a full conviction and a kind of understanding that the claims of Servia in the matter of Zvornik would be conceded; but he had been put off with fair words, empty civilities, and professions of friendship, and nothing had been done.

Had the Porte taken the opportunity of spontaneously conceding to Servia what she claimed, it would have gone far towards cementing kindly relations between the two countries; but now, even if the Porte eventually gave way, which he doubted, it would come too late, as the Prince and his Government were placed in a false position by having fruitlessly undertaken a journey which was from the first unpopular in Servia.

He did not yet know how the matter might end, or whether his Government might not move the guaranteeing Powers to interfere, which, as he said, would not contribute towards friendly relations with Turkey; but being convinced of her rights, Servia was not disposed to let the matter remain as it was. She would bide her time and not act rashly, but it was the fault of the Porte if Servia now tendered her hand to friendly neighbours, instead of to the Suzerain Power.

In reply to a question from me, he said that the sympathy between Servia and Roumania was that of two neighbouring people who felt aggrieved by a common oppressor.

I thanked the Minister for his confidence, and advised him, however great might be his disappointment and annoyance, not rashly to incur risks that might involve his country in great troubles. I said I felt that in every respect it was most desirable that no cause of irritation should be allowed to exist between the Porte and the Principalities, and that I still hoped the matter might be amicably settled; but he seemed to think it was now too late.

I have held the same language to M. Boerescо when he has spoken to me of the pretensions and attitude of the Porte towards the Principalities, and I took an opportunity of asking him to explain what the Prince meant in his reply to me by referring to the "just aspirations of Roumania."

He said that what Roumania asked for was the recognition of her rights under her ancient Capitulations. He had specified them in a speech last year in the Chamber and in a Circular (a report of which I sent to your Lordship in the newspaper inclosed in my despatch No. 8 of the 27th ultimo). These rights were necessary to the proper development of his country, and as Turkey could take no active part, so she should raise no objections to it. Beyond this Roumania had no ambition nor ulterior design; she was satisfied with her natural frontier; and if she had an independent autonomy secured by the collective guarantee (which on no consideration would she sacrifice) she could prove a much firmer friend to Turkey and a stronger barrier against her foes than now. He begged me to assure your Lordship positively

of this, and to invoke the powerful sympathy and support of England, to whom he appealed as a disinterested friend whose Eastern policy coincided with the interests of his country, towards realizing her reasonable and just aspirations, founded, as he contended, upon Treaty rights to which the material progress she had made gave her additional claims. He also said that while nothing would induce the Roumanian Government rashly to do anything by which they might sacrifice the guarantee to which they attached such value, on the other hand they would lose no proper opportunity of perseveringly urging their rights; and that opportunity would probably occur when the Treaties with Turkey expired.

I have not failed in all our conversations on this subject to warn M. Boerescо of the danger of doing anything to disturb the *status quo* here or to forfeit the collective guarantee, and he has been made fully aware of your Lordship's views of what would forfeit it. I am convinced, so far as one can be certain of anything here, that his Government will do nothing rash or unreasonable; but I cannot help thinking that the relations between the Porte and the Principalities might be greatly improved and the objects of the Treaty of Paris better secured if the Porte could be induced to show more tact and consideration in her dealings with the Principalities.

I even go further and think that reasonable concessions in the direction of self-government, for which, in my opinion, Roumania is sufficiently fitted, might be spontaneously made by the Porte without weakening the tie that binds her Dependency, and that such concessions would be in the general interests of tranquillity in Eastern Europe; for there seem elements of difficulty, if not of danger, in the present state of relations between the Sazerain Power and the Principalities which timely concessions that progress, self-reliance, and civilization have rendered expedient, might probably avert.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 17.

Abstract of a Despatch from Count Andrassy to Count Beust, relative to the Commercial Relations of the Danubian Principalities with Foreign Countries.

THE Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, in a despatch dated Vienna, June 14, 1874, expresses to Count Beust his desire of obtaining the views of Her Majesty's Government on a question connected with the commercial relations of Austria-Hungary and the Principalities on her south-eastern frontiers.

The Treaty of Commerce concluded between Austria and Turkey in 1862 has never been applied to Servia or Roumania, for although forming politically an integral part of the Ottoman Empire, they enjoy complete independence in all that relates to internal administration, more especially in commercial matters. Indeed, this independence in matters of Customs' administration is recognized in the Treaty itself by an Article stipulating that its provisions do not affect the import and export duties actually in force in the Principalities of Moldavia, Wallachia, and Servia.

His Excellency proceeds to observe that this independence, together with the absence of any Treaty engagements with Austria, leaves the Principalities at liberty to regulate at pleasure their import and export duties. The uncertainty in matters of commerce arising from such a state of things affects not only Austrian trade with the Principalities, but also the transit trade of foreign countries, and calls for a remedy all the more pressingly now that commercial relations with those countries are facilitated by increased means of communication.

Count Andrassy then calls attention to the question whether the States placed under the sovereignty of the Sultan have the right to treat directly with foreign Powers in matters of commerce.

With respect to Servia, Article XXVIII of the Treaty of March 30, 1856, runs as follows: "The Principality in question preserves its independent and national legislation, as well as entire liberty in matters of worship, of legislation, of commerce, and of navigation;" and by Article XXIII the Sublime Porte gives the same guarantees to the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia. This clause has been confirmed by Article II of the Convention of August 19, 1858, which provides that the Principalities shall continue to enjoy, under the joint guarantee of the contracting Powers, the privileges and immunities of which they are already in possession.

The above provisions do not, says Count Andrassy, draw any distinction between interior and exterior commerce, and any such distinction would, in truth be, economically speaking, chimerical, the latter being only a manifestation of the former. Moreover, had the Powers intended to restrict in such a manner the commercial autonomy of the Principalities, they would have declared the latter bound by the commercial Treaties concluded between the Sublime Porte and foreign countries. The absence of any such stipulation leads Count Andrassy to believe that the entire liberty in matters of commerce guaranteed to the Principalities is to be understood, in the fullest sense of the expression, as comprising complete freedom in regard to external commercial relations, and that, as the Principalities have, for many years past, thought themselves at liberty to conclude Conventions directly with foreign Powers relative to postal and telegraphic communications, extradition, &c., they may also be allowed to treat with them directly on commercial matters, if the necessity for any such agreement makes itself felt.

His Excellency is forced, however, to admit that the Firman of investiture accepted in 1866 by Prince Charles of Roumania, throws some doubts on the question, for the Prince binds himself to respect the principle that no Treaty or Convention can be concluded by him directly with foreign Powers, but that the Sublime Porte will consult the Principalities respecting the provisions of any Treaty or Convention affecting their laws or regulations in matters of commerce. The Firman adds, that arrangements of local interest with frontier countries which do not bear the form of official Treaties, and have no political character, will not be affected by any such restrictions.

Count Andrassy cannot undertake to pronounce upon the question whether the commercial relations of the Principalities can be brought under the bearing of the latter provisions; he can only point out that the question of right, which by Treaty seems decided in favour of Roumania, appears open to discussion when the terms of the Firman are taken into consideration.

The Austro-Hungarian Government are, however, of opinion that, were a decision in the matter given against Roumania, such decision could not affect Servia, and that, as it would be raising gratuitous difficulties to draw a distinction between the two Principalities, the question ought not to be decided to the prejudice of Roumania.

From a practical point of view, it is impossible not to recognize that the commercial relations of foreign Powers with the Principalities of the Lower Danube to be properly regulated can only be settled by direct agreements. The Principalities, owing to their entire independence in Customs matters can, as long as they are not bound by Treaty engagements, raise their duties at pleasure, even to a higher rate than that fixed by the Commercial Treaties between Turkey and foreign Powers, without any redress being obtainable from the Imperial Government since the latter exercises no jurisdiction in commercial matters. To include in commercial Conventions with Turkey stipulations relative to the Principalities would be equally useless, since the Sovereign Court could not enforce their execution without recourse to armed force, if they were rejected, as they probably would be, by the Legislative Chambers of Servia and Roumania. Apart from any other consideration, such violent measures could not be adopted without the consent of the guaranteeing Powers. His Excellency thinks it unnecessary to insist further on the innumerable obstacles which the conclusion of such a Treaty with the Porte would not fail to meet with, and believes he has shown the necessity for foreign Powers of treating directly with the Danubian Principalities in order to ensure a satisfactory settlement of their commercial relations.

He proceeds to recapitulate the arguments above developed before stating the conclusions at which the Austro-Hungarian Government have been led to arrive.

According to Treaty, Servia has the right to conclude agreements with foreign countries in commercial matters. Although such a right is not so clearly granted to

Roumania, there is no reason for placing her on a less favoured footing than her neighbour. On the other hand, any Treaty with Turkey containing commercial stipulations to be applied to the Principalities is condemned to remain a dead letter.

Under these circumstances the Austro-Hungarian Government are decided to request the Sublime Porte to concede to the Servian and Roumanian Governments the right of concluding with foreign Powers commercial agreements bearing no political character. As the Ottoman Government have by the Firman of 1873 conceded this right to the Khedive of Egypt, whom they have never ceased to look upon as an hereditary provincial Governor, and as they have on more than one occasion allowed the Representatives of the Sultan to sign documents bearing an undeniably international character conjointly with the Plenipotentiaries of the Danubian Principalities, it would, says Count Andrassy, be difficult for them to refuse the concession in question without laying themselves open to the charge of inconsistency.

If, against all expectations, the request of the Austro-Hungarian Government were met by a refusal, they would pursue the course already adopted by them and other Powers under similar circumstances, viz., enter into an agreement with the Principalities, including all necessary stipulations, without giving to the instrument itself the form of a solemn Convention or any other ratification than that of the signature of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs.

His Excellency terminates by instructing Count Beust to communicate to Her Majesty's Government his despatch in which he has sought to place clearly before them the reasons which have actuated the Austro-Hungarian Government in this matter, and to demonstrate how eager they are to reconcile the respect due to the sovereign prerogatives of the Sublime Porte with the just demands of the commercial interests of the Empire.

The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador is requested to report to his Government the reception given by Her Majesty's Government to these overtures.

No. 18.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 16.)

(No. 28.)

Therapia, June 8, 1874.

My Lord,

MR. VIVIAN, in his despatch No. 15 of the 20th ultimo, reported to your Lordship the views and language of the Roumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs upon the relations of the Principalities with the Porte.

As M. Boerescu referred to his speech in the Chamber last year, it may be well to remember that it was upon that occasion that, openly repudiating the position assigned to the Principalities by the Treaty of Paris and the Convention of 1858, and denying that the Sultan was the Suzerain or the Prince the vassal, he claimed the right of dealing directly with foreign Powers, and of making Treaties with them as an independent State.

In the face of pretensions such as these, it requires some assurance to endeavour to throw upon the Porte the responsibility of the present state of the relations; for, although the Sultan's Government last year showed a want of tact in allowing itself to be provoked into issuing an ill-considered Circular, which wounded the susceptibility of the Principalities, it never attempted to recall or modify any of their privileges.

Mr. Vivian expresses the opinion that the relations of the Porte and the Principalities might be improved and the objects of the Treaty of Paris better secured if the Porte could be induced to show more consideration in her dealings with them; and also if she made reasonable concessions in the direction of self-government. But I must confess myself unable to call to mind one single instance in which the Porte has tried to prevent the Principalities from exercising the most perfect independence in the administration of their own internal affairs.

It is true that on one occasion the authority of the Porte was invoked by the German Government in a quarrel between the Principalities and a German railway contractor, but even under that heavy pressure the Sultan's Government abstained from action, and the case only served to prove that, in the opinion of one great Power at least, the autonomy and internal independence of the Principalities were not as complete as the Porte allowed them to be.

The Principalities cannot seriously, in fact, pretend that they are not enjoying a complete liberty of internal administration much in excess of that which was conceded to them by the Treaties, and their ill-humour proceeds from an irritation that the Porte

should object to their assuming, in their dealings with foreign Powers, a position to which they can advance no legitimate claim.

Turkish statesmen are aware that it is by a respect for the Treaty arrangements that the Empire holds together, and it may be that under the influence of this feeling they cling to provisions of no great importance in themselves.

The Treaty of Paris and the Convention of 1858 are tolerably explicit as to the position of the Principalities, but, if there could be a doubt about it, the Firman of Prince Charles' Investiture, with the Grand Vizier's letter enumerating the conditions upon which it would be granted, and the Prince's categorical acceptance of those conditions, would afford a commentary rendering all such doubt impossible.

In Aali Pasha's letter, upon the acceptance of which the Firman was given, it was stated, not only that existing Treaties and Conventions between the Porte and foreign Powers should be obligatory on the Principalities, but that "the principle that no Treaty or Convention can be concluded directly between the United Principalities and foreign Powers shall be equally maintained and respected."

The faculty was, however, granted of making with the neighbouring Governments arrangements of a purely local interest, having neither the form of an official Treaty nor a political character.

The Prince, in his answer, bound himself to conform to this condition, and the words are found in the Firman.

Two other points upon which there was discussion, which, though not very recent, may have left some soreness in the Principalities, relate to the granting of decorations and to the coining of money.

Upon neither of these was it the Porte which put itself in the wrong.

Prince Charles took the solemn agreement not to grant the one, and not to coin the other without a previous agreement with the Porte, which had stipulated that the money should bear some mark of the connection of the Principalities with the rest of the Empire.

In defiance of this pledge given under the Prince's hand, his Government, without communication with the Porte, proceeded to cause money to be struck bearing the effigy of His Highness as of an independent Prince, and without the distinctive sign which it had been agreed that the coins should bear.

The objections which were raised by the Porte are probably regarded at Bucharest as one of the instances in which she has interfered with the just rights of the Principalities.

The question regarding the right of the Prince to keep Diplomatic Agents at Foreign Courts, although not alluded to by M. Boerescо in the conversation which Mr. Vivian reports, is doubtless one which he had in his mind when complaining of the unfriendly attitude of the Porte.

If the Treaties, the Firman and Aali Pasha's letter are all silent on the subject, it is evidently because a pretension so contrary to the position that had been assigned to the Principalities had not at that time been raised, but the mode of obtaining redress for any infringement of their privileges pointed out by the Convention of 1858 would, of itself, conclusively dispose of it.

It is stipulated by the 1Xth Article that in the event of any violation of their immunities representations are to be addressed by the Prince to the Suzerain, and if these are not attended to, the complaints may be submitted by the Agents of the Principalities to the Representatives of the guaranteeing Powers at Constantinople.

Such was the mode of communication with the European Powers laid down by the Convention for the definitive organization of the Principalities which was concluded after their privileges and interests had undergone a patient inquiry at the Conferences of Paris.

While the misapprehension which seems to prevail in various quarters has induced me, at a length for which I must apologize to your Lordship, to examine the merits of the pretensions of the Principalities, I would disclaim all wish to deny them any modification or extension of their privileges which their interests may seem to call for, and which can be granted with a due regard to the position which it is essential that they should continue to hold with respect to the Suzerain Power.

The Porte should be encouraged to entertain favourably the representations that may be made by the Principalities for enlargement of their privileges, but it cannot be expected to view with indifference claims inconsistent with the international arrangements when they are advanced as rights and without the acquiescence of the Sultan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 19.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 4.)

(No. 646.)
My Lord,

Paris, July 2, 1874.

THE Duc Decazes spoke to me yesterday of a note which had, he said, been communicated to him, and which expressed Count Andrassy's views on the question of the negotiation of Commercial Treaties with the Moldo-Wallachian Principalities, or, as they style themselves, Roumania.

The Duke said that Count Andrassy argued strongly in favour of the right of Roumania to conclude Commercial Treaties for herself, without the intervention of the Porte, but concluded by suggesting that the authorization of the Porte should be asked before foreign Powers proceeded to enter into actual negotiations with the Government of Roumania.

The Duc Decazes proceeded to observe that he dissented altogether from Count Andrassy's argument, but that he entirely agreed with his conclusion. He could not conscientiously affirm that, under the Firmans and the Treaties, Roumania had any right to negotiate a Commercial Treaty independently of the Porte, but he thought it would be very advisable to ask the Porte to give the Roumanians authority to conclude separate Commercial Treaties for themselves when the Commercial Treaties between Turkey and the European Powers were revised. He added that he was also of opinion that it would be politic and judicious on the part of the Porte to grant the authority gracefully and without demur as soon as it was asked for.

The Duc Decazes spoke more strongly on this occasion of the importance of maintaining the rights of the Porte and the existing state of things in the Levant than he did in the conversation of which a report was made to your Lordship in my very Confidential despatch No. 293 of the 20th March last.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 20.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 6.)

(No. 178. Confidential.)
My Lord,

Vienna, July 2, 1874.

I HAVE had some conversation with Count Andrassy on recent articles which have appeared in Roumanian newspapers, advocating the claim of the Principalities to a greater degree of independence than they appear to be entitled to by Treaty. I said that, although I believed that Sir Henry Elliot had fully stated his opinions to him on the subject at Pesth, he might perhaps like to learn what that Ambassador had recently written to your Lordship upon it, and I read to him the greater part of Sir Henry Elliot's despatch No. 28 of the 8th instant, of which a copy was communicated to me in your Lordship's despatch No. 98 of the 21th ultimo.

Count Andrassy, in thanking me, said that he concurred almost entirely in the statements I had read to him, but that Sir Henry had omitted one point of importance, the concession of freedom of commerce and navigation to the Principalities, which, taken together with the faculty granted to the Prince on his accession, of making arrangements with neighbouring Governments, of a purely local interest, in his opinion justified a claim to contract commercial Treaties with Foreign States. It might be true, he said, that this concession was not explicitly granted, but, considering the relations of the Porte with the Principalities, a liberal interpretation of the terms, on which it was claimed, would be the wisest. Any right so conveyed might be considered personal to Prince Charles, and would not apply to Servia, but, he hoped, nevertheless, that your Lordship, who had taken into consideration a despatch on the subject, which he had addressed to Count Beust, would join with Austria-Hungary in recommending the Porte to settle the question in favour of the Vassal States. Count Beust had, he said, represented your Lordship to entertain some doubt as to the expediency of encouraging concessions to Governments, which would evidently merely consider them as steps to further demands; but he could not himself concur in this view of the case, for, as "qui embrasse trop, mal étreint," he would rather recommend that wishes which were in themselves reasonable, and for which plausible grounds could be assigned, should be complied with, and that means should be taken at the same time to make it

clearly understood at Bucharest that any further encroachments on the Sovereignty of the Porte, or attempts to set aside arrangements adopted in the Treaty of Paris, with a view to the general interests of Europe, would meet with the disapproval of the guaranteeing Powers, and might eventually deprive the Principalities of the advantages which they enjoy under that Treaty.

His Excellency, in answer to an inquiry on my part, said that Count Zichy had been instructed to defer an intended visit to a German watering place, in order that some arrangement might be come to immediately with respect to it, and he expressed regret at a report, which had just reached him, of the Government at Bucharest having adopted a new tariff, apparently with the intention of forcing foreign Powers to contract Commercial Treaties with them, before any right, on their own part, to enter into such Conventions had been clearly established.

According to what I learn here, the Austro-Hungarian Government wish the Christian Vassal States of the Turkish Empire to be put on the same footing with respect to the right of contracting such Treaties as the Viceroy of Egypt. They have already a Convention with Roumania for fixing the tolls leviable on the herds of cattle which migrate annually from Transylvania for summer pasturage in the Principalities, and as their export trade into those provinces is considerable, it is, of course, important to them that it should be secured by Treaty against unfavourable fiscal legislation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 21.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 30. Commercial.)

Foreign Office, July 6, 1874.

Sir,

THE Austro-Hungarian Ambassador called upon me on the 2nd instant and renewed a conversation which he had held with me on more than one occasion as to the expediency of making Commercial Treaties directly with the Governments of the Principalities and of Servia.

The arguments employed by his Excellency being those already stated in the despatch from Count Andrassy, which he read to me on the ultimo, and of which the inclosed abstract has been made, I need not recapitulate them.

Count Beust summed up his case by observing that, if the Governments of the tributary States were willing to accept their position as connected with the Ottoman Empire, in consideration of the exceptional advantage which they gained by having their territory guaranteed, it was desirable to confirm them in these dispositions by removing all unnecessary obstacles to their internal well-being. If, on the other hand, they wanted complete independence, it was equally expedient to deprive them of all plausible pretext for claims which we did not intend to concede.

I said that the desire to be empowered to conclude Commercial Treaties with other countries appeared to me to be prompted rather by political than commercial considerations, since there was no indication of any inconvenience having arisen from the system of informal arrangements at present existing.

Her Majesty's Government, I said, would not take part in pressing on the Porte the necessity of conceding these new rights to the tributary States, rights which did not appear to be either sanctioned or contemplated by existing Treaties, and the demand for which was not likely to be favourably looked upon at Constantinople. But, not seeing that the concession of these claims would involve substantial injury to the Turkish Empire, I should not, on the part of Her Majesty's Government, take steps to oppose the action proposed, as I understood, by the Austro-Hungarian and German Governments, but leave the question to be dealt with by the Government of the Porte, unbiassed by any influence hostile to these demands, which I presumed would be put forward only in a friendly and conciliatory spirit.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 22.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 10.)

(No. 66.)

Therapia, July 2, 1874.

My Lord,

PRINCE GHIKA, the Roumanian Agent, called upon me yesterday, on his return from Bucharest, where he had been summoned by family affairs.

The conversation having turned upon the subject of the Commercial Treaties, I told him that I was endeavouring to promote the wish of the Prince's Government to be left free to make those arrangements for themselves, and that I had pointed out to the Turkish Ministers that it would be for the advantage of all parties if the Porte were to grant them the same privilege as had been given in that respect to the Viceroy of Egypt.

To arrive at this result it would, I said, be advisable to leave the question of right entirely on one side, for upon it there would be no prospect of agreeing.

Prince Charles' Government seemed convinced that they possessed the right of making Treaties, while the Porte was equally satisfied that they did not; and the latter view was supported by the interpretations which had been put upon the existing Treaties by the European Governments, as well as by the formal engagements taken by the Prince towards the Suzerain.

Prince Ghika here stopped me, and said that if I alluded to Prince Charles' letter to Aali Pasha, he was expressly authorized to declare officially that that letter was to be regarded as *nulle* and *non avenue*.

It had not been countersigned by any Minister, and it was, in consequence, not binding upon the Government.

I reminded that Prince Ghika that whatever view might be taken at Bucharest of the letters and Firman, it was through them that the acknowledgement of the Prince's election had been given by the Porte and the European Governments, and I was unwilling to believe it possible that His Highness could now intend openly to repudiate an engagement to which he had put his hand solemnly and after much deliberation.

Prince Ghika replied that this was the affair of the Prince, and not of the country; but that if he was obliged to withdraw from an engagement, it was nothing more than what Sovereigns in other constitutional countries, such as England, were obliged to submit to.

I pointed out that the repudiation of the engagement in question by the Principalities, and their conviction of their own right to conclude Treaties was not sufficient for their purpose, for as long as other Governments were of a different opinion they could not negotiate them without the consent of the Porte, whose rights they would otherwise infringe.

Prince Ghika held, on the contrary, that the proper course for the foreign Governments would be to make the Treaties with the Principalities without communication with the Porte, which would object if consulted beforehand, but which must acquiesce if told that the thing was already done.

What I infer from his language is that little is to be expected from the Roumanian Government in the way of facilitating a practical solution of the difficulty before us, and that they will do nothing to make it easy to obtain from the Porte the authority similar to that already granted to the Khedive, unless it is got as an acknowledgement of an existing right.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 23.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 10.)

(No. 67.)

Therapia, July 2, 1874.

My Lord,

IMMEDIATELY after the conversation with Prince Ghika, reported in my preceding despatch, the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador called upon me for the purpose of speaking about the Treaties of Commerce, and the position of the Principalities in regard to them.

He dwelt upon the importance of the question to Austro-Hungary, to whom it

was a matter of absolute necessity to put her commercial relations with the neighbouring provinces upon a solid basis.

He said his Government was endeavouring to induce the Porte to give the Principalities the same faculty of making their commercial Treaties as had already been given to the Khedive; and he hoped I would support him in the attempt.

I said I had no instructions from your Lordship on the subject, which it seemed still premature to discuss, seeing that the existing Treaties could not be denounced for more than a year; but that personally I agreed with the views of his Government, and believed that the only way of avoiding much embarrassment in respect to these Treaties, would be to allow the Servian and Roumanian Governments to make their own arrangements with foreign Powers.

I said, however, that my experience of the Sultan's Government made me pretty sure that if this faculty was advanced as a right possessed by the Principalities, it would be resisted; and it was consequently desirable to lay the matter before the Porte in a manner likely to ensure for it a more favourable reception.

I then told my colleague of the conversation I had just had with the Roumanian Agent, and Count Zichy, who discussed the question with great moderation, and with no disposition to ignore the rights of the Porte, seemed much surprised at the unblushing repudiation by the Roumanian Government of the engagement with the suzerain power by the letters exchanged in 1866.

As it was evident, he said, that the Roumanian Government would take no step in moving the Porte to grant them an authority, which they consider themselves already to possess; and as the Porte could not be expected to take the initiative, he did not perceive how it was to be obtained.

I said that this difficulty had already struck me, and that after considering the best mode of meeting it, I thought it might be done by the different Governments representing that there were objections to including the Principalities, Servia and Moldo-Wallachia in the fresh commercial arrangements, and inquiring whether the Sultan's Government saw any reason against the negotiations for the Conventions for those parts of his Empire being made directly with his vassals.

If represented as a convenience to the friendly Powers, and accompanied by a recognition of the existing rights of the Sultan, the Porte might be quite as likely to listen to the proposal as if it were asked for by the Principalities themselves; but before taking any step of this kind it would be advisable to ascertain confidentially how such a suggestion would be received.

Count Zichy did not read to me the instruction from his Government which I understand him to have communicated to the Porte, but if I am correct in assuming that more than a year must still elapse before the Treaties can be denounced, Her Majesty's Government may probably be of opinion that the agitation of the question at present is undesirable.

The constant changes in the Turkish Cabinet are of themselves an argument against premature discussion of points upon which no immediate decision is necessary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 24.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(No. 377.) *Foreign Office, July* 13, 1874.

My Lord,

M. GAVARD called upon me on the 8th instant, and, with reference to the claim of the Principalities to conclude Commercial Treaties without recourse to the Porte, inquired whether I considered that the Tributary States possessed the right to raise their import duties without the authority of the Sultan.

He said that they contended that they had this right, which the Porte denied; and that at this moment the Roumanian Government were raising high duties on wine and other articles, which proceeding on their part had occasioned complaints on the part of the French Government.

He desired to know whether Her Majesty's Government had ever expressed an opinion on the matter.

I replied that the question he put was new to me; but that I would endeavour to ascertain what had passed, and give him an answer later.

I understand that the existence of the right now claimed was strenuously denied by the Porte.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 25.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July .)

(No. 2. Commercial.)

My Lord, *Bucharest, July* 14, 1874.

I HAVE the honour to inclose an official translation of the new Customs Law referred to in my previous despatches, which I have only just received from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

This measure has been prepared by the Government without previous consultation with the foreign Agents here, and was hurriedly passed through both Chambers this session. It is now law, and will come into operation on the 1st of January, 1875, whereas our Treaty with Turkey of the 29th of April, 1861, which, by Article XX, is made binding on the Principalities, does not expire until some months afterwards. The Government thus, as usual, leave the Powers to deal with a "fait accompli," being probably afraid, if the Porte were given time to conclude fresh Treaties, that she might again seek to bind the Principalities.

There are several points in which the provisions of the law are at variance with the Treaty, by far the most important being that the law does not limit the import and export duties to any maximum rate per cent., which the Treaty fixes at 8 per cent. and 7 per cent. respectively. This liberty from control is important, however the Roumanian Government may use it at first, as, when once asserted, they can deal with foreign commerce as best suits their interests and their desire for Treaty-making.

Besides this, by the 3rd Article of the Law, the Customs dues are to be assessed by weight, measure, and quantity, and exceptionally *ad valorem*, whereas Article V of the Treaty stipulates for "one fixed rate of 8 per cent. *ad valorem*, or a specific duty fixed by common assent equivalent thereto."

Article 4 of the Law specifies the average value of the merchandize at Bucharest (where prices range high) as the basis for the assessment of the dues with a deduction of from 10 per cent. to 15 per cent. for expenses; whereas, by Article V of the Treaty, it is stipulated that the rate of duty shall be calculated upon the value of the merchandize at the wharf, if brought by sea, or at the first Custom-house, if brought by land. Article 6 of the Law provides for the appointment of a Tariff Commission, named half by the Government and half by the Chambers of Commerce of the five principal commercial towns of Roumania (it will, therefore, consist of natives only), and by Article 7 no modification can be made of the Tariff except by law; whereas Article XXII of the Treaty stipulates that the Tariff shall be fixed by a Mixed Commission, and shall be liable to revision every seven years.

On the other hand, it is only fair to observe that Article 8 of the Law relieves several important articles of British produce and manufacture from import duty, and Article 9 certain articles from export duty which do not enjoy the same privileges under our Treaty with Turkey.

Articles 10 and 11 of the Law prohibit the import and export of certain articles, such as cheap wines, alcohols, and rags, of which no mention is made in the Treaty. The prohibition of the cheaper class of wines will, it is said, seriously affect the trade of Austria, Italy, and France.

By Article 15 the transit trade is relieved from all Customs charges.

These seem to me the most prominent points of difference between the Treaties and this Law, which has been framed, as the Government say, with consideration for the few native industries there are in this agricultural country, but otherwise in a liberal spirit towards foreign products and manufactures which do not compete with Roumanian produce.

The first question is one of principle. Has the Roumanian Government, in spite of the existing Treaties with Turkey, which we have always supposed to bind the Principalities, the right to pass, as a measure of autonomy, a Law which affects foreign commerce otherwise than as those Treaties direct?

The answer of the Government to this objection is, that they consider the regulations of their Customs dues which are paid by the consumer as appertaining to the

right of internal administration and liberty of commerce granted to them by the Convention of Paris; that they have never admitted the application to the Principalities of the Turkish Treaties, as to which they were not consulted, while their provisions have been frequently set aside with the consent of the Powers; namely, by the prohibition in 1866 of the importation of alcohols; by the levy of an octroi duty; by raising the Customs dues on the land frontier beyond the Treaty limits; by the yearly assessment of the Tariff dues instead of septennially; and by the reduction of the transit duty to a lower rate than that stipulated in the Turkish Treaties.

Thus, the various concessions that have been made from time to time to and by Roumania are now taken advantage of and pleaded in proof that she has not been held bound by the Turkish Treaties.

This bold assertion by Roumania of a doubtful right might fairly be challenged, but I see no disposition on the part of my colleagues to object to the law on principle, but only where the shoe pinches in any of its provisions; and, indeed, any such protest would be vain, as the answer would be, "If the Law displeases you, let us come to an arrangement by a Convention."

Her neighbours, too, are from necessity disposed to enter into direct commercial relations with her, and it is only fair, in considering the step she is taking, to make due allowance for her commercial necessities, which cannot be properly understood at Constantinople, and to remember that it is, perhaps, only the natural consequence of the qualified commercial liberty originally granted to her, of the growth and expansion of her commercial interests, and of the greater experience she has acquired in these matters.

For instance, the basis of assessing the dues has been altered from the *ad valorem* system, to prevent the fraud and corruption in undervaluing goods hitherto practised on a large scale by both importers and Custom-house employés with great loss to the revenue; the prohibition of cheap foreign wines is intended to force Austria and Russia to come to some understanding for lowering their virtually prohibitive duties against Roumanian wines; and the Roumanian Government ask with some reason, "What can the Porte know of these matters, which are of vital importance to us?"

It is therefore by no means a sentimental grievance that Roumania seeks to remedy, and it is, perhaps, more to the mode of action than to the act itself that exception can be taken; this will probably be the view taken at St. Petersburgh, Berlin, and Vienna, where I believe there is a most favourable disposition to grant Roumania greater freedom of action in commercial matters. It might have been better if the consent of the Porte had been previously obtained, but I can positively inform your Lordship that under no circumstances would the Roumanian Government stoop to such an appeal.

As the Law fixes no limit to the power of taxing foreign commerce, its effect upon British trade cannot be ascertained until the Tariff is settled; but your Lordship will observe that it permits the free importation of our machinery and coals.

It remains to be seen how, with their values at Bucharest taken as the basis of assessment, the Tariff will affect British manufactured cottons, which are imported here to a considerable amount. I am assured that the 8 per cent. limit will not be exceeded but I am strongly of opinion that foreign commerce, which will not be represented on the Commission, should at all events be heard in settling the Tariff, as the local Chambers of Commerce do not inspire confidence. The Government have named one very good Commissioner in the shape of M. Misilinco, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who will take a leading part in the task confided to the Commission; and he is always ready to listen to advice.

I may add that M. Boerescu has stated to me and all my colleagues that he now hopes and expects to conclude Commercial Conventions with us; and upon my asking why, if Her Majesty's Government did not object to the Tariff, he should expect they would desire to conclude a Convention, he hinted that commercial privileges might possibly be given to other nations that chose to enter into direct arrangements with Roumania which we also might be glad to secure.

The Tariff Commission will meet to-morrow, and I await your Lordship's instructions upon the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 26.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 28. Commercial. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Vienna, July 16, 1874.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's Commercial despatch, No. 30, of the 6th instant, acquainting me with a conversation which you had had with Count Beust as to the expediency of making Commercial Treaties directly with the Governments of the Principalities and of Servia, I have learnt from Baron Orczy that Count Andrassy, having found that his views did not meet with a favourable reception at Constantinople, has deemed it advisable to postpone, for the present, the consideration of the question.

Baron Orczy said that, in his opinion, the Porte would have acted wisely by granting a concession to the Principalities which had already been made to the Khedive, instead of withholding from them a right to which they considered themselves entitled, and which it is the interest of Foreign States that they should exercise, as the only means by which commercial relations with them could be placed on a satisfactory footing. In giving this opinion, however, he had nothing to add which is not stated in the inclosure of your Lordship's despatch; and I repeated to him, with reference to your Lordship's language to Count Beust, that, if the informal arrangements at present existing are sufficient for the regulation of other matters, I did not see why the commercial interests of Austria could not be protected in a similar manner.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 27.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 20.)

(No. 192. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Vienna, July 16, 1874.*

THE Turkish Chargé d'Affaires inquired yesterday of Baron Orczy, in consequence of instructions from Constantinople, whether any information has been received at Vienna as to the object of the Government of Roumania in sending an Agent to Montenegro, and his Excellency answered that he was aware of the arrival of a Roumanian Agent at Cettigne, but that he was ignorant of the object of his mission.

I have learnt from Baron Orczy that he had spoken to M. Marinowitch on the subject, who professed to know nothing beyond the fact of the Agent having passed through Belgrade.

Baron Orczy said, however, that he has been told by the Russian Ambassador that General Ignatieff, on learning that Prince Charles proposed sending an Agent to Montenegro, had instructed the Russian Consul at Ragusa to proceed immediately to Cettigne, and to warn Prince Nicolas of the dangers he might incur if, abandoning a conservative and peaceful policy, he should be led to enter into any engagements with Roumania, which might compromise his relations with the Porte and deprive him of the support of the Powers who are at present friendly to him. These instructions were executed before the arrival of the Roumanian Agent, and his Highness gave the most solemn assurances of his determination to follow the advice which had been tendered to him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 28.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July 22.)

(No. 80. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, July 10, 1874.*

COUNT ZICHY, the Austrian Ambassador, who was about to take two months' leave of absence, and had already had an audience to take leave of the Sultan, has been instructed to postpone his departure for a few days in order to try, if possible, to obtain from the Turkish Government a favourable decision in reference to the Treaties

of Commerce, which his Government wishes to conclude with the Danubian Principalities.

Aarifi Pasha read to me in great confidence a despatch from Count Andrassy, which had been communicated to him by the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador, and asked my opinion upon it.

If the right of the Principalities to make such Treaties is not directly asserted in this despatch, the grounds upon which the claim could be supported are recapitulated in such a manner as to amount to very nearly the same thing; and, with the peculiar temperament of the Turks, I believe it would have been difficult to adopt a line of argument more likely to defeat its own object.

On the other hand, the reasons for allowing the Principalities the faculty of making Commercial Treaties, and the imperative necessity which obliges Austro-Hungary to endeavour to put her commercial relations with them upon a fixed basis, are placed before the Turkish Government with great force and clearness by Count Andrassy; and I told Aarifi Pasha that, as he had asked for my opinion, I could have no hesitation in strongly recommending the Porte to make the Concession that was so much desired by the neighbouring State.

I could not perceive one single benefit to be expected from making a stand upon a point of abstract right, in which no material interest of the Porte is engaged, and upon which, as the European Governments would certainly not be either unanimously or cordially in her favour, the Porte might in all probability be ultimately obliged to give way.

I had subsequently some conversation on the subject with the Grand Vizier, when I held the same language, fully admitting at the same time what I have already informed your Lordship I consider to be the rights of the Porte in regard to all Treaties with foreign Powers.

Of the objections which His Highness felt to acquiescing in the wish of the Austro-Hungarian Government, the most insuperable in his eyes seemed to be that the Principalities had not asked the Sultan for the favour which His Majesty seemed to be expected to be conferred upon them unsolicited.

I said that when the wish and necessities of a friendly Government had been courteously intimated, the dignity of the Sultan would not suffer if His Majesty were to respond to it in a similar spirit, by informing a neighbouring and allied Sovereign that there would be no objection to his negotiating with the vassal States any Treaties that were of strictly commercial and non-political character; but his Highness seemed to consider it indispensable that, if the sanction was to be granted, it must be asked for by the Principalities themselves.

I hinted to the Grand Vizier that the question was one of so much importance to Austro-Hungary that he must not be very much surprised if she considered herself forced to make the Treaties, even if the Porte's consent to such a course had not been signified.

His Highness said that, in that case, the Porte could not, of course, prevent it, and would protest that the proceeding had been an invasion of the Sultan's rights; but he seemed to think that this would be preferable to their voluntary abandonment.

I reminded his Highness that after Austria had concluded the Treaty, and the Porte had recorded her protest, other countries, although not so closely interested, would also have their Treaties to make, and that even the Governments which had always shown such scrupulous regards for the rights of the Sultan could not expected to allow their subjects to be placed in the Principalities on a footing of inferiority to those of other nations.

The impression which I received from the conversation was, that if the Governments of Servia and Moldo-Wallachia were to address a request to the Sultan for the same privilege as that which His Majesty had recently granted to the Viceroy of Egypt, there is every probability that the recommendations of the friendly Powers might prove sufficient to obtain it.

At the same time I believe that the Grand Vizier, looking probably more to his own interests than those of the Sultan or the Empire, would prefer seeing Austria conclude the Treaty without the sanction of the Porte, for in the one case he would probably be accused of having advised his Sovereign to abdicate a right, while in the other he would be able to show that he had made a strong, but fruitless, protest against the act of a foreign Government which he was powerless to prevent.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 29.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 83.)

Foreign Office, July 22, 1874.

Sir,

THE German Ambassador called upon me, and read to me a despatch from Count Bulow expressing the wish of the German Government that English influence should be used with the Porte to bring about the concession to Roumania and Servia of the right to make commercial Treaties on their own account without reference to Constantinople. Some discussion ensued, but the reply which I gave to Count Münster was substantially the same as that which I had already given to Count Beust, namely, that Her Majesty's Government were not prepared to bring any pressure to bear on the Porte to make the concession in question. The matter, I said, appeared to me to be one on which the right of the Sultan and his advisers to form and act on their own unbiassed judgment as to what was best for the interests of the Empire could not be denied, and ought to be respected. But I agreed with Count Münster that the concession proposed involved no real or substantial sacrifice on the part of the Porte, and though it was not my wish to take the initiative in proposing, or actively supporting it, yet no objection would be thrown by Her Majesty's Government in the way of its being granted, and if their advice were asked, they would certainly not recommend to the Porte to place itself in opposition to the wishes both of its own tributary possessions and of the German and Austrian Governments.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 30.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received July .)

(No. 31. Confidential.)

Bucharest, July 18, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE read with much interest the despatches from Sir Henry Elliot and Sir Andrew Buchanan respecting the relations between the Porte and the Principalities that your Lordship has been good enough to send me.

Sir Henry Elliot is probably right in laying the chief blame upon the exaggerated pretensions of Roumania for the existing bad feeling between her and the Porte; although in some questions, as, for instance, the desire of Roumania for greater commercial liberty of action, the Porte might, perhaps, show greater consideration for her susceptibility and real necessities, and make timely concessions with the assent of the Powers, even though they go beyond what the Treaty of Paris requires. For there can be no doubt of the dissatisfaction of Roumania with our interpretation of the position assigned to her by the Treaty of Paris. She is now self-reliant; perhaps too much so; but it is only fair to say she has made considerable progress of late years. She has learnt by experience that the guaranteeing Powers are never so united in opinion on any question as to expose her to the risk of a serious check. She trades successfully upon this disunion, and will continue to do so until she attains her ends, or until the Powers unite in re-defining her position.

Her grievances are mostly sentimental, except that her liberty of commerce is hampered by the Treaties between the Powers and Turkey, by which, in principle, she is bound, and to which she has hitherto so conformed her tariff as to prevent the question being raised. She is now taking a bold, almost a defiant, step to shake herself clear of this tie, which she probably would not have done in this way had she not been suspicious of Turkey, and feared that in fresh Treaties the Porte might again seek to bind her.

Her sentimental grievances are the general disabilities attaching to her position as a dependent State.

I doubt if the desire for independence is as yet so deeply rooted in the country as to render its immediate realization probable; and the Government are well aware that the moment is inopportune for attempting to disturb the *status quo*.

The idea is now chiefly agitated by the present Conservative Government, to whom the Prince has given his entire support since his contemptuous dismissal of the Radical Ministry from office in 1870. The cry strengthens the position and popularity of the Government, and identifies them with the Prince's cause.

On the other hand, as every question here is used as a weapon for party purposes,

the Radicals accuse the Government of embroiling the country with foreign Powers and saddling it with enormous expenses for an army out of proportion to its real wants for a visionary scheme; and they would be glad if they saw their way to upset the Prince, but in office I doubt if they would not be obliged to support the idea.

The chief champions of independence are the Prince and M. Boeresco, who dream of a Belgium in the east, with a neutrality guaranteed by all the Great Powers.

Roumania thus constituted would, according to them, have no ambition to extend her frontiers beyond their natural boundary, the Danube; while protected by the guarantee, without which they admit the existence of such a State would be impossible, she would form an impassable barrier against any attack on Turkey, and on this ground they think the scheme should recommend itself to the Powers. Their own end gained, they profess not to concern themselves with the fate of the other Christian provinces of Turkey.

The Prince is ambitious, and, as a Hohenzollern, cannot brook the idea that he is vassal of the Sultan, while M. Boeresco is ambitious, determined, and a strong patriot.

The army is numerically strong, and its organization, I believe, is much improved.

The difficulty as to the pledges given by the Prince when he received the Firman of Investiture is met rather ingeniously than honourably by the plea that, as the Prince's letter was not countersigned by any Minister, the engagements he contracted cannot constitutionally be held binding on the country.

Thus, link by link, the Roumanians are seeking gradually to detach the chain that binds them, now lightly enough, to the Porte; and they look forward with confidence to their eventual independence, and to its recognition and guarantee by the Great Powers.

Such is, I believe, a faithful description of the state of affairs and of political feelings here, and in such circumstances your Lordship can understand how hopeless it is to expect that a Roumanian Minister could plead to the Porte for a favour, or that any such warning as Count Andrassy suggests should be given against further encroachments, would have any lasting or practical effect, unless Roumania were convinced that it could and would be enforced by the united action of all the guaranteeing Powers.

With respect to the intended creation of an Order here, to which the telegram to the Turkish Ambassador in London refers, I have already informed your Lordship that it was intended to propose it to the Chambers last Session, but that the idea was abandoned because, as the Government say, there are more serious questions to be dealt with first. I have no doubt, however, that the Prince has it still in view, and that the Order will be created whenever a favourable opportunity occurs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

P.S.—I take advantage of a safe opportunity to send this despatch to Constantinople, instead of by post to Vienna.

C. V.

No. 31.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 92.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July 29, 1874.*

YOUR Excellency will have seen from the despatch to Lord Lyons, of which a copy was inclosed in my despatch No. 91 of the 29th instant, that the French Government have inquired whether Her Majesty's Government consider that the Tributary States of the Ottoman Empire possess the right of raising their import duties without the authority of the Porte.

It appears from the despatch from Mr. Vivian, No. 2, Commercial, of the 14th instant, of which a copy has been sent to Constantinople, that the Principalities have from time to time varied their import duties, and have made other fiscal regulations in connection with Customs duties without consulting the Sultan, and, so far as Mr. Vivian's information goes, without interference or protest by the Porte.

On the other hand, the Treaty of Commerce between Turkey and Great Britain expressly provides, in the XXth Article, that "The present Treaty shall receive its execution in all and every one of the Provinces of the Ottoman Empire, that is to say,

in all the Possessions of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan situated in Europe or in Asia, in Egypt, and in the other parts of Africa belonging to the Sublime Porte, in Servia, and in the United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia.

Articles IV and V provide that the Customs duties shall not exceed a certain percentage *ad valorem* on imports and exports, and these Articles also stipulate for most-favoured-nation treatment.

It would seem from Mr. Vivian's despatch that the changes made in the import duties of the Principalities on the occasions therein referred to, have not been in excess of these provisions of the Treaty. Her Majesty's Government have, consequently, not had occasion to protest.

A new Tariff has now, however, been passed in the Legislature of the Principalities which Mr. Vivian states will impose a scale of duties which may be found on examination to be inconsistent with the Treaty. Her Majesty's Government not having yet received a copy of the Tariff can express no decided opinion on this point; but, were it to prove so, it would evidently be contrary to the engagements entered into by the Porte, and Her Majesty's Government would have a right to appeal to the Porte to afford redress to any British commercial interests which might be affected.

Before replying to the inquiry of the French Government, Her Majesty's Government would be glad to receive a report from your Excellency on the subject, and also to learn from you how the Porte regards the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 32.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 94.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July 29, 1874.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 66 of the 2nd instant, reporting your conversation with Prince Ghika on the question of the right of the Principalities to conclude Commercial Treaties, I have to approve your Excellency's language on that occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 33.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 95.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, July 29, 1874.*

I HAVE received your Confidential despatch No. 80 of the 10th instant, reporting your conversations with Aarifi Pasha and the Grand Vizier with reference to the Treaties of Commerce which the Austro-Hungarian Government wish to conclude with the Danubian Principalities, and I have to approve the language which your Excellency held on these occasions.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 34.

Count Apponyi to Count Andrassy.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Beust, July 23.)

Paris, le 27 Juin, 1874.

JE profite du départ du Comte Khevenhüller pour rendre à votre Excellence un compte succinct d'un entretien que je viens d'avoir à l'instant même avec M. Desprez, Directeur Politique au Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, délégué à cet effet par le Duc Decazes.

Je m'étais empressé de communiquer au Ministre la dépêche de votre Excellence du 14 courant, relative à la question des Traités du Commerce à conclure avec les Principautés Danubiennes et la Servie. Le Duc m'avait demandé la permission de

garder cette pièce, de réfléchir sur son contenu, d'en causer avec M. Desprez, et de m'informer ensuite, par ce fonctionnaire, de la manière dont le Cabinet Français envisageait cette question.

Ce que m'a dit M. Desprez se résume dans les points suivants:—

Tout en rendant justice à la supériorité de rédaction de la dépêche du 14 Juin, et à la lucidité avec laquelle la question de droit y est traitée, cette exposé n'a pas convaincu le Cabinet de Versailles que les trois Principautés eussent le droit de conclure des Traités de Commerce avec les Puissances étrangères, droit qui, selon l'opinion Française, est incontestablement réservé à la Porte, en vertu du Traité de 1856, des arrangements de 1858, et du Firman de 1866. Le Comte Andrassy lui-même semble se placer à ce point de vue puisqu'il compte solliciter la Sublime Porte d'accorder aux Principautés le droit de conclure avec les Etats étrangers des arrangements commerciaux sans caractère politique.

Le Cabinet de Versailles donne à ce projet du Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois sa pleine approbation, et le considère comme la solution à la fois la plus pratique et la plus propre, dans sa forme, à obtenir l'assentiment de la Sublime Porte. Il pense qu'il serait sage et politique de la part de cette dernière d'accorder de bonne grâce la concession qu'on lui demande, et que les circonstances rendent à peu près inévitable. Le Duc Décazes écrira en ce sens à Constantinople, et il espère que si—comme votre Excellence se le propose—la demande de l'Autriche-Hongrie est présentée avec les ménagements dus aux susceptibilités Turques, si le caractère non-politique des arrangements à conclure est bien précisé, et si on les dépouille des formes solennelles usitées dans les Traités Internationaux, la Porte ne refusera pas un consentement que, dans un cas analogue, elle a déjà accordé à l'Egypte.

Une dépêche écrite à ce point de vue va être incessamment adressée au Marquis d'Harcourt.

Agréez, &c.

No. 35.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

(No. 24.) *Foreign Office, July* 31, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch, Commercial, No. 2, of the 14th instant, reporting on the new Roumanian Customs Law.

Her Majesty's Government doubt whether the Roumanian Government would be justified in giving effect to the new law in the face of the XXth Article of the Treaty of 1861, and the claim of the Government at Bucharest to ignore the Treaty engagements entered into by the Suzerain Power is a matter of political importance which cannot be dealt with as a mere question of Tariff. Her Majesty's Government must, therefore, consult Sir H. Elliot upon the subject before coming to any decision as to the course they will pursue.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 36.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 2.)

(No. 35. Commercial.) *Therapia, July* 22, 1874.

My Lord,

MR. VIVIAN'S despatch, Commercial, No. 2, of the 15th instant affords a confirmation of the remarks I have lately made to your Lordship of the probable difficulties in which we may be involved in reference to the commercial relations with the Danubian Principalities.

Prince Charles' Government seems determined not only to assert the right of making fresh Commercial Treaties, but to repudiate the application to the Principalities of those now existing.

Even this, however, would not be sufficient for their purpose, for they would have not only to repudiate the recent Treaties of Commerce, but likewise the ancient capitulations under which, until otherwise arranged by subsequent Conventions, the

import duties into all parts of the Turkish Empire are limited to 3 per cent., and which, moreover, secure to Great Britain all the advantages that may be conceded to other Powers.

It cannot be supposed that these extravagant pretensions would ever have been advanced unless the Principalities had felt convinced that they would be supported from quarters where more importance is attached to the convenience of the moment than to the maintenance of the principles to which all the Governments of Europe are pledged.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 37.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 2.)

(No. 36.) *Therapia, July* 22, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the accompanying despatch from Mr. Vivian, which I have received from him under flying seal.

Her Majesty's Agent has satisfied himself that Prince Charles and his Government are steadily and almost openly aiming at establishing the entire independence of the Principalities.

Their grievances are shown to be sentimental and imaginary, rather than real, and, though Mr. Vivian considers that the Porte might show more consideration for their necessities, and make concessions in giving them greater commercial liberty of action, it is to be remembered that the Principalities have never asked the Suzerain Power to make these concessions, and the Porte has simply adhered to the arrangements made with the concurrence of all the European Powers.

There can, indeed, be little doubt that any application by Prince Charles' Government for the extension of their privileges, to the extent of ensuring them entire commercial freedom, would be favourably entertained, but Mr. Vivian's present despatch shows that the Turks are not mistaken when they say that it would be a delusion to suppose that any concession, short of a recognition of absolute independence, would satisfy the expectations of what is still the vassal State.

The Principalities hope to attain this with the sanction of the Governments through whose countenance they have already made so many steps towards it, but, notwithstanding the satisfaction expressed by Count Andrassy at the attitude assumed by them since the change in the policy of Austria, it is not to be supposed that his Excellency will designedly encourage an attempt likely to lead to such serious complications.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 38.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

(No. 26.) *Foreign Office, August* 3, 1874.

Sir,

IN your despatch No. 13 of the 13th of May last, you called my attention to the Treaties concluded between the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia and the Porte in 1391, 1460, 1511 and 1529, which the Roumanian Government still consider continue in force and by reason of which they claim the privilege of self-government, and the right of direct representation abroad, of concluding Treaties of Commerce with foreign Powers, and of making peace or war, while they maintain that the tribute they pay to the Porte is only an equivalent for protection against foreign aggression, and in no way a token of vassalage.

It would seem to be a matter of much doubt whether the Treaties alluded to can be produced in corroboration of the assertion of the Roumanian Government, but, were they still in existence, subsequent events have, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, totally changed the aspect of affairs, and in refutation of these assertions it is only necessary for me to refer you to the Firman of Investiture of Prince Charles from the Sultan in 1866. The Prince in this document is styled Prince of the United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, and not Prince Charles of Roumania, a title

which he has arrogated to himself, and which has never been officially recognized either by Turkey or the European Powers.

The Firman of Investiture among its nine Articles expressly stipulates that the Prince is forbidden to conclude Treaties or Conventions directly with foreign Powers, and Her Majesty's Government have at different times given their friendly support to the protests of the Porte against the recognition of Diplomatic Agents appointed by the vassal States of the Sultan.

To the different Articles of the Firman Prince Charles of Hohenzollern gave his assent in the letter of the 23rd of October, 1866, which you will find at page 67 of the inclosed volume.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 39.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 4.)

(No. 4. Commercial.)
Bucharest, July 24, 1874.

My Lord,

THE Austro-Hungarian Government have given substantial proof of their satisfaction at the signature of the recent Railways Convention with Roumania, by conferring the Orders of the Iron Cross and of Franz Josef upon M. Lascar Catargi, the Prime Minister, M. Bocresco, Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Cantacuzène, Minister of Public Works, M. Costaforu, Roumanian Agent at Vienna, and M. Mitilinéo, Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

In a conversation I had with the Austrian Agent yesterday, he stated the views of his Government with respect to the right of the Principalities to conclude Treaties of Commerce to be as follows:—

That the texts of the Treaties were in favour of the rights of Servia;

That although the rights of Roumania were less clear, it would not be wise, on that account, to deny her a privilege which the Powers might concede to Servia;

That the Austrian Ambassador was, therefore, instructed to endeavour to persuade the Porte to make this concession spontaneously to Roumania;

But that if the Porte refused to yield to this advice, the Government of Austro-Hungary would have to take advantage of the latitude given to the countries bordering on Roumania to conclude a Convention with that Government, regulating their mutual commercial relations.

These views have, I believe, already been communicated to your Lordship by Count Beust; but it is the first statement of any distinct line of policy which I have, as yet, heard here.

The other Agents content themselves with avoiding any recognition of the new Customs Law pending the receipt of instructions from their Governments, and as the promised official translation of the Law has not yet been furnished to us, no foreign Government has as yet had the opportunity of examining it in detail.

Until I receive your Lordship's instructions upon the subject, I shall do nothing by which it may be implied that I recognize the pretensions of the Roumanian Government; but beyond pointing out that the provisions of the Law are at variance with our Treaty with Turkey, which by Article XX binds the Principalities, I have expressed no opinion upon the action of the Roumanian Government.

I inclose two copies of the translation of the Customs Law, which has this moment reached me.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 40.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 17.)

(No. 223.)
Vienna, August 12, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE taken an opportunity of mentioning to Baron Orczy the opinion which your Lordship appears to entertain from your instructions to Mr. Vivian, which were

forwarded to me under flying seal, on the subject of the Customs Law lately passed by the Roumanian Chambers, and of the wish of Prince Charles' Government to conclude Commercial Treaties with foreign Powers.

With respect to the former question Baron Orczy said he believed there was little probability of the Government at Bucharest putting into immediate execution the new Customs Law, as the Tariff which had been copied from that of Belgium was now found to be incompatible with the interests and requirements of the country, and an intention to substitute the Tariff of the Netherlands would, doubtless, prove equally objectionable. He still spoke, however, of the necessity of Austro-Hungary regulating their commercial relations with Roumania by a Convention similar to those concluded for railways and other matters, and as I stated to him that your Lordship attaches more importance to the principle on which the Principalities claim the right to conclude such commercial Conventions, than to their obtaining such a right from the Porte, the claim being evidently put forward as a step towards more complete independence, his Excellency answered that Austro-Hungary would never countenance the ambitious views of Prince Charles on that subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 41.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 16.)

(No. 225. Confidential.)
Vienna, August 12, 1874.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 192, marked Confidential, of the 16th ultimo, respecting the mission of a Roumanian Agent to Montenegro, it is believed here that a suggestion was made by him to Prince Nicolas, that it might be expedient for the Principalities to endeavour to obtain some amelioration of their position towards the Porte through the good offices of the great Powers, but that his Highness declined raising the question, or taking any common action in it with Roumania.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 42.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 18.)

(No. 115. Confidential.)
Therapia, August 8, 1874.

My Lord,

UPON calling yesterday upon the French Ambassador, I found Prince Ghika, the Roumanian Agent, engaged with him in conversation respecting the Commercial Treaties of foreign Powers with the Principalities.

The Prince had just made to my colleague the declaration which I have already reported him as having made to me, that the letter and engagements of Prince Charles of 1866 were to be regarded as *nuls et non-avenus*, and Count de Vogüé expressed, as I had done, his regret and surprise that such a course should have been thought compatible with the dignity and good faith to be expected from His Highness.

The Prince's arguments being on this occasion precisely those which he had used to me, I need not repeat them, and, indeed, they may be sufficiently summed up by his declaration that, as history gave us such numerous examples of Sovereigns and nations who had disregarded their engagements, he saw no reason why Prince Charles should be expected to adhere more strictly to his.

I can assure your Lordship that I give this argument of Prince Ghika's exactly as he used it, and without exaggeration.

I said that the assertion of a right to repudiate his engagements, when he found them inconvenient, seemed a strange argument to bring forward to induce foreign Powers to advocate Prince Charles's right to conclude them, and that the doctrine which he proclaimed made it almost impossible to discuss a question depending upon principles, on which our views were irreconcilable.

Count de Vogüé's language was perfectly explicit.

The negotiation for the recognition of Prince Charles had been conducted by his

predecessor, and he showed that every word of His Highness' engagement, and of the conditions upon which he was acknowledged, first by the Porte, and afterwards by the Powers, had formed the subject of discussion and negotiation, so that a more formal engagement could hardly be conceived.

To this it may be added that, in November 1866, the Porte, in communicating to the Powers the Firman of Investiture granted to Prince Charles, invited them to "prendre acte de l'arrangement particulier en vertu duquel l'investiture a été donnée, et qu'elles lui feront parvenir leur accession dans la forme qu'elles trouveront à propos d'adopter."

I am unable at this moment to refer to the answer given by Her Majesty's Government to this communication, but that of the French Government, as I find it in published papers, was that "le Gouvernement de l'Empereur n'hésite pas à adhérer entièrement à ces arrangements, et la présente communication a pour objet d'en transmettre à votre Altesse (Aali Pacha) la déclaration formelle."

Both the Firman and the Prince's letter would thus appear to have acquired the character of International Acts.

Count de Vogüé and myself endeavoured to persuade Prince Ghika that as all the guaranteeing Powers were desirous of seeing this question settled in the manner wished for by the Principalities, it was not too much to expect that Prince Charles' Government should take the step best calculated to arrive at such a result, by expressing to the Porte their anxiety to enjoy the privilege already given to another dependent State, but the agent replied that this was out of the question; the Principalities could not ask as a favour what they claimed, and were prepared to assert as a right that had always belonged to them, and had been confirmed by the Treaty of Paris.

I remarked that the interpretation of the Treaty of Paris by those who had concluded it was not in conformity with that of his Government, and Count de Vogüé went the length of giving Prince Ghika a warning from which I had abstained.

My colleague remarked that if the Principalities thought fit to press their pretensions against the rights of the Sultan beyond what His Majesty's Government were prepared to tolerate, the Porte might represent the necessity of repressing them by force to the guaranteeing Powers, who, finding the Principalities in the wrong, would be obliged to leave them to extricate themselves as they could.

This argument, although only dropped in a private conversation, appeared to produce a marked effect upon Prince Ghika, but, nevertheless, the Roumanian Government seem so confident that Austria will assist them in carrying their object in the manner upon which they are intent, that the chance of their listening to more prudent counsel is very slight.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 43.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 124.) *Foreign Office, August* 25, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's confidential despatch No. 115 of the 8th instant, reporting your conversation with Count de Vogüé and Prince Ghika respecting the Commercial Treaties of foreign Powers with the Principalities, and I have to approve your Excellency's language on that occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 44.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 29.)

(No. 890.) *Paris, August* 28, 1874.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes expressed to me yesterday a wish to know what course Her Majesty's Government intended to take with respect to the new Roumanian Customs Tariff, which the Roumanian Government was, he understood, about to put into force,

without any regard for the Commercial Treaties between the Porte and foreign Powers.

The Duke observed that he heard that Prince Charles was now in England. He added that the Prince had not been to Paris, but that he had reason to think that His Highness' pretensions were much larger than those of the Prince of Servia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 45.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 140.) *Therapia, August* 18, 1874.

My Lord,

YOUR Lordship, by your despatch No. 92, has directed me to make a Report upon the question of Treaties of Commerce between foreign Powers and the Danubian Principalities, and also to inform you how the Porte regards the matter.

My own opinion on the subject of these Treaties, was conveyed by my despatch No. 115, which was sent off only a few days before your Lordship's reached me; and it will have been seen that I do not consider that any reasonable doubt can be entertained that the right now claimed by the Principalities is at variance with their position towards the Porte, as recognized by the European Powers.

I observed, indeed, that I was not then able to refer to the terms in which Her Majesty's Government had acknowledged the Porte's communication of Prince Charles' Firman of Investiture, and the letters upon which it had been based; but since I have ascertained that the adherence to those arrangements was conveyed to the Porte in an identic note concerted by the guaranteeing Powers, the binding nature of the agreement, not only upon Prince Charles, but upon the different Governments, appears to me only one degree less formal than if it had been recorded in a positive Treaty.

I have had several conversations with Aarifi Pasha upon the subject; and I have told him that your Lordship wished me to put Her Majesty's Government in possession of the views of the Porte upon it, informing him generally of the substance of the despatch instructing me to obtain it.

His Excellency's language is never very decided; but he said that the Porte could not admit a question as to the binding effect throughout the Sultan's Dominions of the Treaties concluded with foreign Powers.

It was true, he said, that the Roumanian Tariff had not been the same as that in force in other parts of the Empire; and this had been to a certain extent sanctioned by an Additional Article annexed to the Austrian Treaty; and no complaints had been made to the Porte of a higher rate of duty having been imposed than that paid by Treaty.

If, however, the Roumanian Government tried to levy a higher rate, the Porte would certainly be bound to attend to the application of any Government which called upon them to enforce compliance with the provisions of the Treaty.

Aarifi Pasha did not distinctly say that he admitted the right of the Principalities to draw up their Tariff, provided they kept within the maximum of duties mentioned in the Treaties; but he said that no one would try to oblige them to take duties which they did not wish to levy; and that if any Government complained that the maximum was exceeded, or that they were not treated on the footing of the most favoured nation, the Porte was liable to be called upon to obtain redress, and would not shrink from its duty.

The duty on wine, respecting which M. Gavard spoke to Lord Lyons, as mentioned in his despatch to your Lordship No. 377,* must, I imagine, be that which is proposed to be levied under the new Tariff, but which is not yet in force.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

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* (Qy.) This seems to be a clerical error and the passage ought to be, "spoke to your Lordship as mentioned in your Lordship's despatch to Lord Lyons No. 377," &c.

No. 46.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 145.) *Therapia, August 18, 1874.*

My Lord,

IN Mr. Vivian's Commercial despatch No. 2 of the 14th ultimo, commenting upon the new Roumanian Customs Law, he reports a hint of M. Boerescо that the countries which thought fit to abstain from making Treaties with the Roumanian Government might find themselves excluded from commercial privileges granted to others.

This is a threat which I have likewise heard fall from Prince Ghika, the Roumanian Agent, and the expectation seems to be entertained that every Government will find itself forced into making the Treaties to save its subjects from being placed in a position of inferiority.

Not only the Treaties of Commerce, but the ancient Capitulations guarantee to Her Majesty's subjects the treatment of the most favoured nation, and I would submit to your Lordship whether it might not be desirable to let the Roumanian Government be made aware that they deceive themselves if they suppose that they will be permitted to set this stipulation aside.

In connection with this subject, there is a consideration which it is essential not to lose sight of.

Although the Principalities are at this moment endeavouring only to exercise the power of making Commercial Treaties, there is not an argument put forward in support of their right to do so which does not equally apply to Treaties of a political character. They do not even conceal their conviction that they possess the one as much as the other, but they consider it more prudent to proceed step by step.

It may perhaps be, and I think it desirable, that the Sultan should confer on the Principalities the Privilege already granted to Egypt; but if one neighbouring State, without waiting for the Porte's sanction, should conclude Treaties of Commerce with them, and thus recognize their right of making them, another neighbour would be equally authorized to conclude Treaties of a political nature, of which the effect might be profoundly to modify the provisions of the Treaty of Paris and compromise the security of the Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 47.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 146. Confidential.) *Therapia, August 19, 1874.*

My Lord,

I HAVE just been having some conversation on the subject of the Roumanian Treaties with the German Ambassador.

His Excellency does not support the claim of Prince Charles' Government to the right of making them, but considers it highly desirable that the Porte should concede the principle.

He says, however, that it is certain that, whether the Sultan acquiesces or not, Austria will make the Treaties. His own instructions are simply to support the Austrian Ambassador.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 48.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 147. Confidential.) *Therapia, August 19, 1874.*

My Lord,

WITH the impression that prevails of the existence of a close understanding between the Governments of Austria, Germany, and Russia, it has been a matter of some interest to ascertain the attitude assumed by Baron Werther, the new German Ambassador, who has now been here some weeks.

The Austrian Ambassador is at this moment on leave, and from my own observation and from what I hear from others, there is, I think, very little doubt that Baron Werther sees only with the eyes, and hears only with the ears, of General Ignatiew.

Whether this is through an easiness of character, or by the instruction of his Government, I am unable to say, but if the same line is adopted by Count Zichy on his return, it will not augur well for prolonged tranquillity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 49.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 156. Confidential.) *Therapia, August 20, 1874.*

My Lord,

BARON HERBERT, the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, called upon me this morning, when we had some conversation upon the subject of Commercial Treaties with the Danubian Principalities.

He said that the last despatches of Count Beust led to the impression that your Lordship, if not actually adopting the views of his Government, had become more favourable to them than you had been at first.

I replied that I was not aware of any change having taken place in your Lordship's opinion, and that although you would gladly see the wishes of Austria and of the Principalities met by the Porte in a friendly spirit, the question was regarded by Her Majesty's Government as one for the Sultan's Government to decide upon; and, I added, that my latest despatches from your Lordship contained evidence that Her Majesty's Government looked upon the Treaties as applicable to the Principalities, and as conferring a right of appeal to the Porte for their enforcement if Prince Charles' Government acted in opposition to them.

I repeated to Baron Herbert the arguments used in my despatches going to your Lordship by the present messenger, with reference to the evil consequences to be expected if any one Government were to admit the right of the Principalities to conclude Treaties, and he appeared personally to take the same view, and to be aware of the importance of doing nothing to weaken the respect due to the Treaties.

He asked me if I knew the feelings of the Porte, and I told him what I had reported to your Lordship, of the obligation under which the Sultan's Government considers itself to lie, if appealed to by other Powers, to prevent the Principalities from imposing a rate of duties in excess of the maximum established by the Treaties, and I said that if the Principalities were convinced that any attempt on their part would be followed by such an appeal, they would in all probability avoid exposing themselves to it; whereas if they expected, on the contrary, to be supported in their pretensions, they would naturally persist in them.

Baron Herbert said that his Government had latterly been much pleased by the declaration received from Bucharest that there was no intention on the part of the Principalities to alter their relations towards the Sultan.

I remarked that the whole value of such a declaration depended upon their manner of understanding what their relations are, for as interpreted by themselves they do not debar them from the exercise of every act of independent sovereignty.

With respect to the authorization to be granted by the Porte for the conclusion of Treaties of Commerce, I observed to Baron Herbert that, however much disposed to consent to it they might be, the Sultan's Government could have no right, without the acquiescence of the other parties to the existing Treaties, to release the Principalities from the obligations contained in them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 50.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received August 31.)

(No. 35. Confidential.)

Bucharest, August 21, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE just had a satisfactory conversation with the Prime Minister, M. Catargi, upon the subject, among other matters, of the new customs law, and the question of the right of Roumania to enter into direct commercial relations with foreign Powers.

M. Catargi asked me whether I had received any instructions from Her Majesty's Government upon this subject. I said that the despatches I had received did not authorize me to make any communication to him or to say what course Her Majesty's Government might pursue in the event of the new law and tariff being found on examination to be inconsistent with the stipulations of our Treaty with Turkey; but I could warn him that Her Majesty's Government thought the claim to ignore Treaty engagements was a matter of political importance, which could not be dealt with as a mere question of Tariff. I advised him, therefore, to pause before taking a step which might seriously compromise his Government. M. Catargi endeavoured to impress upon me the unobjectionable nature of the law itself, and the improbability of the Tariff, by which the measure could alone be judged, imposing higher duties than were consistent with the Treaty stipulations. In short, he wished me to understand that the new Customs Law asserted no further pretensions or rights than does the existing one, and that the dues would be kept as heretofore within the Treaty limit.

I pointed out to M. Catargi that, besides certain stipulations which I thought were clearly inconsistent with the Treaty, the new law did not, like the present one, limit the dues within the 8 per cent. rate fixed by the Treaty. I said I know this limit had been inserted in the original draft and subsequently erased, evidently with the view of ignoring the Treaty, and whatever might be the present intentions of the Government it left them free, were the principle once admitted, to impose any dues they choose on foreign commerce, and thus enforce the negotiations of Treaties. I said I thought the Government made a great mistake in attempting to cut the knot in so summary a manner; and I asked him whether, instead of insisting on a right which was certainly open to challenge and thus provoking opposition, it would not be better to attempt to conciliate all parties by applying to the Porte for permission for the Principalities to conclude their own commercial arrangements.

I understood M. Catargi to say that the Roumanian Agent at Constantinople had already sounded the Porte unsuccessfully, and that his Government could not risk a direct refusal from the Porte, which would be fatal to them, and possibly to the Prince.

But he thought, as a middle course, that his Government might possibly appeal to the Powers to plead their cause with the Porte, and if they would consent to ask the Porte to grant the commercial affranchisement of the Principalities, he would, on the return of the Prince and the rest of his colleagues, undertake to advise them to refer the matter to the Powers.

I asked him whether, in this case, the execution of the new law could be postponed until the question was settled. He said this might easily be done, if he could be assured that the Powers would entertain and support the appeal of the Principalities.

M. Catargi went on to assure me of his earnest desire in this, as well as in all other questions, to follow, as far as possible, the wishes and advice of the Powers, and to keep well with the Porte; he promised that so long as he was at the head of affairs he would discourage all rash agitation. The right of managing her own commercial affairs was, he considered, the one want vitally necessary to the progress and development of the Principalities, but beyond this he did not share the more advanced opinions that had been broached, involving questions which, whatever might lie in the future, it was premature and unnecessary to discuss for the present, and he said that so long as he was Prime Minister I might disregard such views, from whatever quarter they might come.

This language is satisfactory, and it probably indicates that the Government have discovered that the guaranteeing Powers are more or less united in disapproving their action in the matter of the Customs Law, and M. Catargi seems anxious to do all he can to conciliate both the Powers and the Porte.

I should add that he gave me clearly to understand that he was expressing nothing but his own personal view as to a step which he could only undertake to advise the Prince and the rest of the Cabinet to take in the event of its being considered expedient by the Powers.

I should be glad to know if your Lordship thinks that the difficulty might be arranged in this manner, as it seems to me that the principle of the Treaty would not be infringed if the Porte made this concession to the Principalities at the instance of the Guaranteeing Powers, while the only real grievance of the Principalities would thus be satisfied. If no such arrangement can be arrived at, I have little doubt that, whatever may be the fate of the new law, the Principalities will endeavour to enter into commercial relations with their neighbours, by which their commerce will probably be placed on a more favourable footing than other foreign commerce.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 51.

Aarifi Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated by Musurus Pasha to the Earl of Derby September 3.)

Le 19 *Août*, 1874.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

J'AI reçu la dépêche que votre Excellence a bien voulu m'adresser le 9 Juillet, pour me rendre compte de son entretien avec Lord Derby sur la prétention du Gouvernement Moldo-Valaque de conclure de Traités de Commerce avec les Puissances.

J'approuve entièrement le langage que vous avez tenu en cette circonstance au chef du Foreign Office. C'est avec satisfaction que nous avons relevé la manière si juste dont Sa Seigneurie envisage cette prétention, et nous lui sommes reconnaissants d'associer à la défense de nos droits une voix aussi autorisée que la sienne. Avec la droiture et la constance dans les traditions politiques qui le distinguent, Lord Derby repoussera certainement avec nous des tentatives et des velléités dont le moindre inconvénient serait d'ouvrir la porte aux complications. Une pareille éventualité favoriserait peut-être certaines entreprises; mais nous ne croyons pas qu'une Puissance aussi sagement conservatrice et aussi intéressée au maintien du *statu quo* consacré par des actes solennels que la Grande Bretagne puisse contribuer, même indirectement, à faire passer dans le domaine des réalités des projets chimériques tendant à mettre tout en question.

Dans cet ordre d'idées, la prétention des Principautés Vassales est une première étape sur le chemin des exigences autrement importantes, autrement inadmissibles. Quel que soit l'accueil que quelques-uns des Cabinets Européens réservent à cette prétention, la ligne de conduite du Gouvernement Impérial lui est tracée d'avance par les principes salutaires qui ont présidé aux Traités Internationaux et dont il est résolu de ne pas dévier. Nous espérons que les Puissances apprécieront, comme elle le mérite, notre attitude, et reconnaîtront en même temps qu'en cette occurrence nous avons encore placé la question sur le terrain de la stricte légalité. Mais si, contre notre attente, ces Principautés venaient à rencontrer dans leurs agissements l'approbation des Puissances, ce que nous regretterions profondément, et s'il nous était donné de voir ces projets se traduire en faits, la Sublime Porte garderait intacte sa liberté de prendre vis-à-vis de ces provinces vassales telles mesures restrictives qu'elle jugerait propres à annuler l'effet de leurs Traités ou arrangements spéciaux.

Je vous prie de développer et de fair valoir, le cas échéant, ces considérations dans vos entretiens avec Lord Derby, et de consacrer vos efforts pour assurer en faveur de nos droits l'appui et le concours éventuels de Sa Seigneurie.

Veuillez agréer, &c.

(Signé) A. AARIFI.

No. 52.

Mr. St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 38.)

Bucharest, August 28, 1874.

My Lord,

WITH reference to Mr. Vivian's despatch No. 35 of the 21st instant, respecting the new Customs Law and the question of the right of Roumania to enter into direct commercial relations with other Powers, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that M. Schefer, the Acting French Consul-General at Bucharest, read to me a despatch which he had received from his Government, instructing him to state to the Government at Bucharest that, whatever changes they made in their Customs Law,

the Commercial Treaty concluded with the Porte would be strictly enforced by France until the time fixed when a revision can take place, that is to say, March 12, 1876.

M. Schefer having informed M. Lahovary, Minister of Justice and of Foreign Affairs, *ad interim*, of the contents of the despatch he had received, requested to know what course of action they were, under these circumstances, likely to adopt. M. Lahovary replied, that the sincere desire of his Government was to maintain the good will and support of the Great Powers, and that, if France objected to the proposed changes in the tariff, the principles of the Treaty with the Porte should remain intact until the time appointed for the revision of the tariff.

On being asked by M. Schefer whether the Roumanian Government would be willing to apply to the Porte for permission to conclude Commercial Treaties with other countries, he at once replied, "No, never!" but added, that if the Guaranteeing Powers could be induced to plead their cause, and the Porte by these means granted them the right, it would be gladly accepted.

Whatever new arrangements may, in the meanwhile, take place between the Roumanian Government and the neighbouring States, I have good reason to believe that the new Law, in consequence of the firm attitude taken by some of the Great Powers, will remain in abeyance until the time shall have arrived when the provisions now in operation can be revised.

I have also to report that the Italian Consul-General has received similar instruction from his Government, namely, that the principles of the Treaty with the Porte should be strictly adhered to; but not wishing to take the initiative in the affair, the Italian Government was willing to adopt any desirable arrangement that might be suggested by States more closely interested in the question.

In this morning's impression of the "Romanul," a leading paper at Bucharest, appeared an Article, of which the following is a translation:—

"The Austro-Hungarian papers announced that M. Zichy, the Hungarian Minister for Public Works, will shortly start for Bucharest." The "Romanul" then remarks: "The object of this journey is said to be a conference relative to the new railway junctions; but its real purpose probably is to conclude a Treaty of Commerce so much desired by Austro-Hungary."

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. ST. JOHN.

No. 52 A.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 14.)

(No. 255. Confidential.)

Vienna, September 9, 1874.

My Lord,

THE professed intention of the Roumanian Government to disregard the engagements contracted by Prince Charles with the Porte previous to His Highness' investiture by the Sultan, may, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, give a new character to the claim which they have put forward to contract Commercial Treaties with foreign Powers; but the question will, I believe, continue to be treated here as one of expediency, and little importance will be attached to the adoption at Bucharest of the principle that one of the parties to an international engagement may violate it, when it suits his convenience to do so.

I am assured, however, that Count Andrassy has no intention of pressing the Porte for an early decision on his recent proposals, and that he will not bring them forward again, unless in concert with Russia and Germany, which possibly means that these Powers have already adhered to his views; and it may have been an understanding with respect to them, that General Ignatieff alluded to in his confidential communication reported in Sir Henry Elliot's despatch No. 120 of the 12th August. In speaking to me on the subject some days ago, Baron Hofmann admitted that the Principalities have no legal right to contract the proposed Treaties, but he argued that, as no Roumanian statesman could ask the Porte for such a right without offending popular feeling and sacrificing his position in the country, the Porte should make no difficulty in granting it at the request of friendly Governments, whose interests require that they should have the means of placing their commercial relations

with Roumania on a more satisfactory footing than can be effected under present circumstances.

This argument would be a better one if the Roumanian Government were indifferent on the subject, but it is for Her Majesty's Government to judge whether, if the Government of Prince Charles were made to understand that the desired privilege could only be obtained in a legal manner, they would not deem it expedient to accept the concession on terms which would satisfy the Porte that the Tributary State had paid due respect to its engagements to the Sultan. The Government of Bucharest appear fully to appreciate the advantages they enjoy from an European guarantee of their institutions, and that guarantee would lose an important element of its value if Her Majesty's Government should ever consider that the proceedings of the Principalities had relieved them from it; as I believe, whatever, may be the present policy of Russia, she would have preferred a Turkish intervention for separating the Provinces, on the fall of Prince Couza, to their union being continued under an European Prince. The defiant attitude assumed by Prince Charles and his Ministers can, therefore, only be accounted for by the success, which has hitherto attended repeated violations, by their predecessors, of the Treaty of Paris, with the encouragement of some and the sufferance or acquiescence of the other Guaranteeing Powers, and from the same reason they seem to be looked upon here in the present question as masters of the situation, and that, because they do not choose to ask for the privilege they aspire to, other Governments must; and little or no consideration is paid to the impolicy of thus weakening the force of engagements intended to secure the integrity of Turkey.

Baron Hofmann, in defending the views of his Government, went over old ground, repeating that Her Majesty's Government cannot be more desirous than Count Andrassy to promote the prosperity and maintain the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, but that, as the populations of the vassal States are of the same races and of the same religion with those of the neighbouring Provinces of Austria-Hungary, the Government of the Emperor is placed in an exceptional position, and has difficulties to contend with in dealing with those States, from which Western Governments are free. He said the Austrian Government had protected their interests in them through Turkish influence, as long as any shadow of it existed; but as that influence has now entirely disappeared, it is necessary to seek other means of maintaining such relations with them as the interests of the Empire may require. To illustrate his meaning, he said that Austro-Hungarian territory had recently been violated by Roumans, and if the Government at Bucharest refused satisfaction for the outrage, he asked would an appeal to the Sultan lead to any result? or could the Porte protect the hundred thousand Austro-Hungarian subjects in the Principalities from acts of injustice, against which it was hoped they might be secured by a Treaty of Commerce with the Government of Prince Charles.

I said that these reasons only proved the expediency of Treaties of Commerce being contracted with the Principalities, but not that the Porte should grant a right to the Roumanian Government which they did not possess, but which they declared they would exercise without its sanction; and I expressed regret that Austria should support them in a course which it might be hoped they would modify, if they found it necessary to do so, as I understood they had already shown a disposition to respect French remonstrances against their new Tariff law, with respect to which I also believed Her Majesty's Government were not likely to consider as valueless the stipulations which referred to the Principalities in their Commercial Treaty with the Porte, as long as it lasted.

Baron Hofmann objected, however, that it was in the interest of the Porte itself that Count Andrassy's proposals should be accepted, for if the Porte did not accept them, and if Russia, which is not improbable, should think fit nevertheless to conclude a Commercial Treaty with the Government of Prince Charles, would any of the guaranteeing Powers protest against such a Treaty, or could the Porte prevent it from being carried into execution?

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 52 B.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received September* 15.)

(No. 176.) *Therapia, September* 7, 1874.

My Lord,

MR. VIVIAN, Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Bucharest, having been here for the last few days, we have had various conversations on the affairs of the Principalities.

It was satisfactory to learn from Mr. Vivian that there had latterly been a marked improvement in the tone adopted at Bucharest, and a greater appearance of moderation in advancing the supposed rights of the Principalities, while, on the other hand, he will be able to assure the Roumanian Government that, however little countenance they are to expect from Her Majesty's Embassy in the assertion of claims at variance with the rights of the Sultan, and of the Governments having Treaties with him, they can calculate upon our always recommending the Porte to respond in a generous and liberal spirit to their wishes for such extension of their commercial privileges as the progress and present position of the Principalities may seem to render reasonable.

I wish, however, that I could add that Mr. Vivian had been able in any way to modify the conviction I have already conveyed to your Lordship, as indeed he has likewise done, in reference to the fixed intention of the Prince to shake off all connection with the Porte, and to establish his own independence.

With the knowledge of this being his Highness' aim, we are bound to keep it in view in the consideration of the different questions which arise between the Porte and the vassal State.

Some, though not any important, commercial interests may seem to be involved in the question of the right of the Principalities to make their own Tariff, but how subordinate that consideration is to the political object in view may be judged by the fact that the Principalities would prefer sacrificing the former altogether to requesting as a concesssion from the Porte the authorization to make their own commercial Treaties.

The new privilege thus obtained would lose its value as not sufficiently preparing the way for the further pretentions which, for the moment, are kept in the background.

When in the Assembly at Bucharest Prince Charles' Minister deliberately pronounced a speech afterwards published as a pamphlet and circulated as the political confession of faith of his Highness' Government, repudiating the very position of the Principalities as a vassal State of the Empire, and claiming every right exercised by independent kingdoms, the guaranteeing Powers cannot seriously pretend to believe that the Principalities have the intention of adhering to the international arrangements.

These aspirations for complete independence are certainly natural, and may perhaps be justifiable, but their existence cannot be ignored, and the question for the decision of the Cabinets is whether their development is to be tacitly encouraged so as to lead gradually to an event which it may not be possible ultimately to prevent, or whether by a firmer attitude the Principalities should be taught that the fundamental principles of 1856 are to be maintained.

Much may be said against either course, but I believe less danger will attend the latter.

Only once, to the best of my recollection, has any Government shown resolution in dealing with the Principalities, and that was when Prince Bismark announced his intention of appealing to the Porte for the justice which he considered withheld from German subjects in reference to the Strusberg Railway Convention.

Under the circumstances of the case that appeal may have been of doubtful propriety, but the Cabinet of Berlin was known to be in earnest, and the success of it was immediate and complete.

On all other occasions a very different line was followed with results tending little to the dignity of the Cabinets but much to the encouragement of the Principalities in their encroachments.

We have seen identic notes from the Consuls-General at Bucharest, protesting against a projected measure, contemptuously answered by its immediate formal promulgation.

Resolutions of the Ambassadors assembled in Conference, solemnly recorded in official Protocols, met with no greater respect: they were quietly disregarded by the Principalities, which invariably succeeded in having their own way, and it is not to be wondered at if they now expect the same thing.

Prince Ghika said to me perfectly openly, "We will make our own Treaties, the Porte will protest, and that will be an end of the matter."

I cannot believe it to be sound policy to flinch from meeting a present difficulty at the cost of having to deal with a much more serious one hereafter, and it would, therefore, I believe, be desirable that Mr. Vivian should be instructed to intimate to the Roumanian Government that, in the event of an attempt on their part to infringe the provisions of our Treaties with the Porte, or treat Her Majesty's subjects with less favour than those of any other nation, Her Majesty's Government would feel obliged to call upon the Porte to take steps to protect our rights.

Whether the adoption by the Porte of any such measure of coersion against the Principalities must be preceded by the unanimous sanction of the Powers is not very clear from the terms of the Treaty, but if such unanimity is held to be indispensable it would nearly amount to a declaration of their pratical immunity from all control.

In that case there would seem to be nothing left but to allow the Prince's Government to pursue its way, for the assent of the Austrian, and perhaps other Governments, to such measures could not in the present instance be expected, but it would not then be to our credit to continue to protest against the legality of the course which the Principalities are inclined to follow, if we are prepared to submit tamely to see those protests disregarded as they have been on former occasions.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 53.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received September* 19.)

(No. 40.) *Bucharest, September* 12, 1874.

My Lord,

SIR HENRY ELLIOT has been kind enough to send me a copy of his despatch to your Lordship, No. 176 of the 7th instant, recording his opinions upon the pretensions of the Principalities to conclude their commercial arrangements with foreign Powers independently of the Porte, and suggesting the course we should pursue.

His Excellency states very clearly and accurately the purport of our recent conversations and the views he expressed to me, in which I generally agree; but I venture to indicate a danger, which I also suggested to his Excellency, that I see in threatening to invoke the interference of the Porte in this question.

I fear that if, as is more than probable, such a demand were not supported by the other guaranteeing Powers, it might not only have not practical result whatever, but it would serve to show the Roumanian Government more clearly than ever the want of unanimity among the Powers, and the consequent impunity with which they might act.

In the present temper of the Government, or at all events of the Prime Minister, when he seems really disposed to listen to the wishes and advice of the Powers, would it not be better to reserve such a threat until the Treaties are actually infringed or our interests attacked, and to confine any present representation to an insistance on our Treaty rights? It is true that the undoubted aspirations and ambitious aims of the Prince and some members of his Government must be taken into consideration, but I think they now clearly see that the agitation of any such views would be most inopportune and distasteful to the Powers, while such a rude check as a threat of the interference of the Porte, supposing even such interference to be warranted at the instance of one or two only of the Powers, would either be utterly ineffectual or so seriously embarrass the Government as to drive them into some rash course of action which might create a far more serious difficulty than that we wish to avoid.

A second conversation with M. Catargi, in which I told him plainly that I had clearly ascertained at Constantinople that the concession the Principalities required would never be granted as a matter of right, confirms the favourable impression I have already conveyed to your Lord and to Sir Henry Elliot of his moderate and conciliatory views. Short of appealing to the Porte directly, he is ready to advise the Prince and

his Cabinet to adopt any conciliatory course which the Powers may think most expedient; and might not any arrangement for the commercial affranchisement of the Principalities assume a form by which it could be clearly shown that it was the concession of a favour and not the admission of a right?

In any case, I think, if M. Catargi's advice is adopted on the return of the Prince, the new Customs Law will probably be dropped, or deferred for the present, on the excuse that the Tariff could not be prepared in time; if so, the present Tariff will continue in operation, and we shall have no ground of complaint. The course that the Government may then probably pursue will be to negotiate commercial Conventions with the neighbouring States, and it remains to be seen if our interests are injured, or if any other Powers follow suit.

I have earnestly recommended M. Catargi to cultivate better relations with the Porte, and to instruct his Agent at Constantinople to modify his tone and language. He said he would adopt my advice, and, as a proof of the sincerity of his desire to be on terms of good neighbourhood with Turkey, he told me that, hearing that intrigues were going on against her in Bulgaria, he had taken the most stringent measures, through his Agents along the Danube, to prevent any Roumanian participation in the agitation. He trusted that Turkey would reciprocate this good feeling.

I should add, with reference to the approaching military manœuvres, that M. Catargi tells me it is untrue that the Prince of Montenegro is invited, and that the number of troops to take the field will be much less than is supposed, as he is determined that the expenses of the manœuvres shall not exceed the Parliamentary grant; the number of troops will, therefore, probably be reduced to about 19,000 men, and I believe that the army fated to be beaten will not represent a Turkish force.

It was the Acting French Consul-General who gave me the positive information which I conveyed to your Lordship that the invitation had been sent to and accepted by the Prince of Montenegro.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 54.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 23.)

(No. 968. Confidential.)
Paris, September 21, 1874.

My Lord,

WITH reference to Sir H. Elliot's recent despatches to your Lordship on the subject of the Roumanian Tariff, I have asked the Duc Decazes if this question does not appear to him likely to be a troublesome one, and how he proposes to deal with it.

The Duke said that the first question to consider was whether the proposed Tariff would be more, or less, favourable to foreign commercial interests than the present one. If it should turn out on examination to be more favourable, the Powers could hardly be expected to offer a very energetic opposition to it.

I replied that I was not acquainted with the provisions of the proposed Tariff, but that I was much surprised to find the question of it regarded by his Excellency as a commercial rather than a political one. Whatever might be the commercial advantages of the proposed Tariff to the Roumanian or other markets, the Roumanian Government itself regarded their importance as so entirely secondary to that of the political question involved in the Tariff, that it was resolved not to accept them as a concession from the Porte; and, when the Minister of Prince Charles openly declared in the Roumanian Assembly that he no longer recognized the Suzerainty of the Sultan, the Powers to whom that declaration is distinctly addressed must consider, first, whether it be consistent with their own dignity to acknowledge the position thus assumed by the Government of the Principalities; and secondly, whether it be now in their power to prevent it.

The Duke said that France cannot possibly acknowledge the present pretensions of Prince Charles, and that she protests against them.

I ventured to observe that the more energetically that protest is made, the more undignified will be the position of the Powers who make it, if it be with impunity disregarded by the Roumanian Government; and therefore it appeared to me desirable,

in making such a protest, to consider betimes what, if any, are the available means of giving practical effect to it.

The Duke said that the difficulty of an effectual protest was increased by the present policy of Austria. It must be acknowledged that, owing to her geographical position, Austria's commercial and industrial relations with the Principalities are peculiar, and the want of all recognized international character in those relations was, doubtless, inconvenient to the Austrian Government. I observed that this inconvenience had hitherto been obviated, or at least greatly mitigated, by commercial Conventions, which, though not signed as international Treaties, were, for all practical purposes, equally binding; and I could not see why this system should not be continued pending the settlement of the present question in a manner consistent with the dignity of the Treaty Powers.

The Duke replied that he was himself of the same opinion; but that, nevertheless, we had to deal with the fact that Count Andrassy is resolved to recognize the new Roumanian Tariff with or without the sanction of it by the Porte.

He (the Duke), when this question was first raised, had suggested that, without reference to the Roumanian Government or its pretensions, the Sultan should be requested by the Powers to sanction the new Tariff *proprio motu* as a concession—not to Roumania—but to His Majesty's allies and friends, in some form which should adequately recognize and reaffirm his Suzerain rights. This suggestion he had mentioned to Lord Lyons, who appeared to approve of it, but doubted its acceptance by the Porte, a doubt shared by Aali Pasha, the Porte's Ambassador at Paris.

Nevertheless, he should have been prepared to urge the adoption of some such mode of forestalling and turning the present difficulty, if he could have carried Austria with him. But Count Andrassy had refused to join in, or to support, the proposed recommendation to the Sultan, on the ground that it would involve a recognition of the Sultan's right to reject it; and that, if the Sultan did reject it, the Powers by whom it was made would be obliged to respect the decision of His Imperial Majesty; whereas he, for his part, was resolved to recognize the Tariff, whether the Sultan does so or not.

The Duke added that the present Eastern policy of Count Andrassy is not very intelligible (an opinion which I cannot but share), and that it has greatly stimulated most inconvenient pretensions on the part, not only of Prince Charles, but also of Prince Milan, who has lately requested the French Government to recognize an Order of Honour which he has instituted, or proposes to institute, in Servia.

This request has been declined.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 55.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 170.)
Foreign Office, September 25, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE to inform your Excellency that I approve the language employed by you in conversation with Baron Holtzem on the subject of the right of the Principalities to conclude Commercial Treaties, as reported in your Excellency's despatch No. 255, Confidential, of the 9th instant.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 56.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 5. Commercial.)

Bucharest, September 14, 1874.

My Lord,

IN the year 1870 an arrangement, it seems, was made between the foreign Consuls-General at Bucharest and the Roumanian Government by which, at their instance, it was agreed that the Tariff of export dues should be fixed annually instead of septennially as heretofore, by a Mixed Commission composed equally of natives and foreigners, and that the Tariff so revised should come into effect on the 13th of October of each year. The arrangement received the sanction of Her Majesty's Government and the practice has been regularly observed up to the present time, but this year the Government, for reasons which are self-evident, have as yet taken no steps to convoke the Commission, and it is probable that they will be very loth to do so.

I have, however, thought it right, after speaking to the foreign Minister on the subject, to address him officially the note, of which copy is inclosed, asking for the early convocation of the Commission, and some of my colleagues have done the same. It remains to be seen what answer the Government will give to this request, but they will be puzzled how to act, as there is a lapse of time between the 18th of October, 1874, when the revision of the Tariff should be completed, and the 1st of January, 1875, when their new law and Tariff (if they are maintained) come into operation, to which some Tariff must be applied.

In any case the course I have taken reserves our rights, and I am only sorry that in the absence of most of my Colleagues on leave my attention was not called to the subject earlier, for my short experience here had not made me aware of the existence of this arrangement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

Inclosure in No. 56.

Mr. Vivian to M. Boerescu.

Bucharest, September 14, 1874.

M. le Ministre,

IT is my duty to recall to your memory the arrangement made between the Prince's Government and the foreign Agent at Bucharest in the year 1870, the recognition of which is recorded in M. Carp's official note of the 14th of July, 1870, by which, at the instance of the Roumanian Government, it was agreed that the Tariff of export duties should be fixed annually, instead of septennially, by a Mixed Commission.

As any changes that may be found necessary in the Tariff ought to be made before the 1st/13th October, there is no time to lose, and I would, therefore, beg you to be good enough to inform me as soon as possible of the date on which you propose to convoke the Commission in accordance with the annual practice regularly observed since the conclusion of the arrangement above referred to.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 57.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 184.)

Therapia, September 10, 1874.

My Lord,

THE Roumanian Agent yesterday afternoon put into my hands the inclosed Memorandum on the new Customs Law of the Principalities, and on the right of his Government to conclude Commercial Treaties.

In the conversation which ensued Prince Ghika brought forward no arguments which your Lordship will not find in the Memorandum, and in Mr. Vivian's reports of the views of the Roumanian Ministers.

Allusion having been made to the possibility of the Principalities concluding a Treaty of Commerce with Austria, Prince Ghika said that when that example had been set, he presumed that the interests of British subjects would suffice to induce Her Majesty's Government to follow it.

I replied that he might find himself mistaken, for if Her Majesty's Government considered that their engagements to the Porte debarred them from making such Treaties, they would not consent to do it, and the interests of Her Majesty's subjects would have to be protected in some other manner. If, as I assumed from his language, it was proposed to deny to British subjects advantages given to others, unless we made a Treaty, I presumed the course of Her Majesty's Government would be to represent to Prince Charles' Government that such a proceeding was contrary to our Treaty rights, but if these representations were disregarded, Her Majesty's Government would have to consider whether it might not be necessary to appeal to the Porte.

As I gathered from Prince Ghika, although he did not directly assert it, that it was not intended to make any change till the Turkish Treaties had expired, I pointed out to him that the Customs Law which is to take effect from the 1st January next, contains various provisions entirely at variance with those of the Treaties, and he intimated that the application of these clauses might easily be deferred.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 57.

Memorandum by Prince Ghika upon the Roumanian Customs Law.

NOTRE droit de régler les questions douanières peut se soutenir tant au point de vue de la théorie pure qu'au point de vue de la situation politique qui nous est acquis par les Traités, les faits, et les précédents créés, reconnus et consacrés par toutes les Puissances étrangères.

Cette loi est appelée à remplacer différents règlements en vertu desquels nos Douanes étaient administrées jusqu'à ce jour et à assurer la police de nos frontières.

Les droits de Douane doivent être fixés par des Tarifs généraux et par des Conventions qui seraient conclues avec les Etats étrangers (Article 2). Le mode de taxation des marchandises à la Douane a été et est encore défectueux en Roumanie, car cette taxation se fait seulement selon la valeur, ce qui donne lieu à nombre de fraudes de la part des importateurs, ou de ceux qui, en passant la Douane, font des déclarations de beaucoup inférieures à la réalité, et aussi à différents abus et actes arbitraires de la part des employés préposés aux Douanes.

La nouvelle Loi (Article 3) admet ce principe beaucoup plus juste et plus avantageux tant au fisc qu'aux commerçants tenus de payer les droits de Douane, que les marchandises seront, selon leur nature, taxées d'après le poids, la mesure, ou le nombre, et que quelques-unes seulement, par une rare exception, seront tarifées *ad valorem*.

Ce principe a été admis déjà dans différents pays.

L'Article 4 décide qu'on prendra pour base de la tarification des marchandises la valeur moyenne qu'auront ces marchandises sur la place de Bucarest, au moment de l'élaboration du Tarif, et non la valeur des marchandises au lieu de provenance, comme il a été fait jusqu'à ce jour.

Mais il ne résulte pas de là que les marchandises seront taxées plus lourdement, car la base qui servira de norme à leur tarification sera la valeur en gros, ce qui constitue un avantage en faveur des commerçants, pour peu qu'on réfléchisse à la différence de

prix de la marchandise quand elle se vend en détail, et passe, avant d'arriver au consommateur, par trois ou quatre mains.

C'est encore pour éviter de frapper le commerce de trop fortes taxes que l'Article 4 prévoit une diminution de 10 à 15 pour cent sur la dite valeur pour les marchandises exclusivement étrangères, c'est-à-dire, pour celles qui n'ont pas leurs similaires parmi les produits Roumains. On a voulu compenser ainsi, postérieurement à l'achat à l'étranger, les droits de sortie perçus par les Douanes étrangères, les frais de transport, d'assurance, et autres.

Une autre exception, de même nature, est créée en faveur des marchandises tarifées *ad valorem*. Les droits à percevoir sur ces marchandises seront calculés d'après leur valeur au lieu et au moment où elles seront présentées pour être douanées.

En l'absence de Conventions Commerciales avec les Puissances étrangères, le Tarif des droits de Douane ne peut être élaboré que par une Commission Roumaine, dans les conditions exigées par l'Article 6. Nous serons prêts cependant à admettre que ce travail soit confié à une Commission Mixte, aussitôt que nos relations commerciales seront réglées par une Convention spéciale avec les Puissances étrangères. La seule prohibition qui soit créée, et qui n'existait pas jusqu'à ce jour, est celle relative à l'importation de vins ordinaires. (Article 10, alin. 5.)

Cette disposition est nécessaire pour encourager l'industrie nationale, surtout alors que nos vins sont frappés aux frontières étrangères de taxes telles qu'elles équivalent à une véritable prohibition. Le jour où les taxes qui frappent nos vins à l'étranger auront été diminuées, nous serons heureux de lever à notre tour la prohibition sur l'importation des vins étrangers, et d'admettre, sur la base d'un Traité conclu directement avec nous, des taxes modérées, ou peut-être même le libre échange des vins.

Par l'exemption de droits de Douane à l'exportation (Article 9) en faveur de plusieurs produits de notre sol et de notre industrie, tels que le sel, les tabacs en feuille ou préparés, les vins et vinaigres, les eaux-de-vie, la bière, le goudron, les produits des mines et autres, nous encourageons, il est vrai, notre industrie, mais nous procurons en même temps par ces exemptions d'importants avantages au commerce étranger.

Ce même effet résulte des exemptions pour l'importation prévues à l'Article 8.

L'Article 15 établit des dispositions utiles et avantageuses pour le transit des marchandises en les exemptant de tout droit de Douane à l'entrée et à la sortie. Mais il va sans dire que nous ne renonçons pas au droit de transit. Ce droit sera fixé par des tarifs généraux (*vide* Article 136). Cependant nous serions disposés à le supprimer en faveur de tout pays étranger dont le Gouvernement conclurait avec nous un Traité de Commerce.

L'Article 68 donne à l'Administration des Douanes le droit de visiter les navires qui entrent dans nos ports, pour s'assurer si le chargement effectif correspond aux déclarations des registres. Cette disposition ne peut soulever aucune objection, car elle est partout adoptée pour garantir les intérêts du fisc.

La franchise de certains ports, tels que Braïla, Galatz, Ismaïl, facilite à la contrebande un développement des plus dommageables pour l'Etat. D'après les dispositions du Titre IV de la Loi, ces villes cesseront d'être ports francs à partir du 1er Janvier, 1876. A cette date, les dites communes devront avoir construit des magasins et des entrepôts. La création de ces entrepôts écartera la conséquence fâcheuse de la franchise des ports, à savoir la contrebande, et conservera tous ses effets utiles, c'est-à-dire, les avantages que ne peut manquer de procurer au commerce la faculté de déposer provisoirement sur le territoire Roumain certaines marchandises avec exemption de tout droit de Douane moyennant que plus tard elles soient transportées ailleurs, ou introduites dans le pays, après paiement, dans ce dernier cas, des droits d'importation.

Telles sont les principales dispositions de la nouvelle Loi douanière, surtout en ce qui concerne le commerce étranger. Revenons maintenant sur notre droit de régler les questions de Douane. A ce propos, il convient de rappeler que, d'après la science de l'économie politique, les taxes de Douane sont des contributions indirectes, c'est-à-dire, qu'elles ne sont pas payées directement par le consommateur. Ces taxes sont acquittées par les commerçants à la frontière, et augmentent pour les consommateurs le prix des marchandises. Comme impôts, ces taxes forment une source de revenus, et permettent de faire face aux dépenses publiques.

Selon le droit des gens, chaque nation a la faculté d'établir, d'élever, ou d'abaisser les tarifs des droits de Douane, et même de prohiber l'importation ou l'exportation d'une marchandise. La Douane constitue donc un droit d'administration intérieure. La Roumanie a toujours exercé ce droit ; c'est un fait qu'il serait difficile de contester.

Pour affirmer l'indépendance de nos Douanes, je me base non seulement sur les droits qui résultent des Capitulations conclues avec la Turquie (Capitulations reconnues et consacrées par les Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris) mais aussi sur des précédents qui prouvent jusqu'à l'évidence que, même dans la pratique, nous avons de tout temps joui de l'indépendance de nos Douanes.

En effet, je puis établir que les Traités de Commerce conclus par la Turquie à différentes époques n'ont jamais été appliqués en Roumanie, malgré la mention que ces Traités faisaient de notre pays.

Si nous nous reportons à la période la plus triste de notre histoire, nous verrons que nous avons pleinement et sans contestation joui du droit de liberté douanière. Cette vérité est confirmée par un acte que le Prince de Moldavie signait en l'année 1784, en faveur des commerçants sujets Autrichiens. Il est stipulé dans cet acte que les Autrichiens ne paieront pour l'importation et l'exportation des marchandises que les droits de Douane conformément aux tableaux élaborés et établis par la Chancellerie Princière dans le courant de l'année.

En 1838 et les années suivantes, les Traités de Commerce conclus entre la Turquie et les différentes Puissances ne furent pas non plus appliqués dans les Principautés. La Moldavie et la Valachie continuèrent à jouir de leur régime exceptionnel, sans rien changer à leurs tarifs.

Il en fut de même pour les Traités de Commerce que la Porte conclut postérieurement (1861 et 1862) et qu'elle vient de dénoncer.

L'examen des dispositions de ces Traités suffit pour établir la conviction qu'ils n'ont jamais reçu d'exécution en Roumanie.

Tous ces Traités établissent :—

1. Que les droits d'exportation les produits du sol et de l'industrie de l'Empire Ottoman seront de 8 pour cent, et que ces droits seront diminués chaque année de 1 pour cent, jusqu'à réduction définitive au bout de 7 ans, à une taxe fixe de 1 pour cent *ad valorem*.

2. Que les droits d'importation en Turquie des produits du sol et de l'industrie seront de 8 pour cent *ad valorem*.

3. Que le Tarif des droits de Douane qui sera discuté et admis par les Commissaires nommés *ad hoc* restera valable pendant sept ans.

4. Que le transit des marchandises importées en Turquie pour être réexpédiées dans d'autres pays sera réduit à 2 pour cent, et, au bout de huit ans, à une taxe fixe et définitive de 1 pour cent. Et,

5. Que l'importation du tabac sous toutes ses formes, du sel, et des munitions de guerre, est prohibé.

Relativement au 1er et au 2me point, j'observerai que les droits pour l'importation et l'exportation ont différé et diffèrent en Roumanie. En effet, d'après nos lois propres, le droit d'exportation n'a été et n'est chez nous que de 1 pour cent, et ce droit même a été souvent supprimé. Quant au droit d'importation, cette taxe n'est que de 7½ pour cent.

Relativement au 3me point, nous établirons que le Tarif des droits de Douane est chez nous discuté et décidé tous les ans, conformément à la loi Roumaine sur la matière, et que l'existence de cette loi est reconnue par toutes les Puissances étrangères qui envoient régulièrement chaque année des Délégués au sein de la Commission chargée d'examiner et d'établir le Tarif annuel.

Sur le point 4, je rappelerai que le transit des marchandises a été et est de 1 pour cent sur notre territoire.

Enfin, sur le point 5, j'observerai qu'à côté des objets qui y sont mentionnés, la Loi Roumaine de 1867 sur les spiritueux, renouvelée par celle de l'année courante, a également prohibé l'importation des alcools ordinaires. J'ajouterai que, d'après les dispositions des dites lois, on procède chez nous, pour constater la qualité du liquide, à une analyse chimique, et dans les dossiers du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères se trouvent plusieurs demandes faites par les Représentants des Puissances garantes au sujet, du plus ou moins d'impartialité de ces analyses, mais sans que jamais le droit de prohibition soit mis en discussion, ce qui implique la reconnaissance de ce droit.

Toutes les Puissances étrangères sont entrées en rapport avec le Gouvernement Roumain pour régler directement les relations commerciales réciproques. A l'appui de cette assertion, on peut citer la note du 31 Janvier, 1870, adressée au Ministère des Affaires Etrangères par MM. Green, Agent et Consul-Général d'Angleterre ; K. Zulauf, Agent et Consul-Général d'Autriche-Hongrie ; et Mellinet, Agent et Consul-Général de France, par laquelle ces trois Agents, au nom du Corps Diplomatique, par suite des négociations commencées sur les droits d'accise (d'octroi), déclarent admettre pour les

articles confectionnés à l'étranger l'imposition, sous le titre d'accise au port de débarquement en Roumanie, d'une taxe spéciale de 2 pour cent d'après le tarif d'importation.

De tout ce qui est exposé plus haut, il résulte que les droits de la Roumanie, dans la question qui nous occupe, ont été reconnus en fait, et que les Puissances étrangères ont constaté par là combien il serait impossible, sinon même inique, de nous imposer leurs Traités de Commerce avec la Turquie. En effet, en vertu de l'Article XXIII du Traité de Paris, qui assure à la Roumanie une pleine liberté commerciale, l'application de ces Traités à notre territoire ne peut se soutenir.

Il est inutile d'invoquer aussi, à cette occasion, l'Article VIII de la Convention de Paris, qui, pour assurer l'indépendance de notre administration, a stipulé que les Traités conclus par la Turquie avec les Puissances étrangères ne nous seront applicables qu'autant qu'ils ne porteront pas atteinte à nos immunités.

Ainsi les immunités d'une administration distincte et indépendante sont assurées à la Roumanie, et la Douane fait, sans contredit, partie de ces immunités. Une modification à notre régime douanier ne peut donc être introduite qu'avec le consentement du pays, par suite de négociations auxquelles il serait admis à participer. En un mot, les modifications ne peuvent s'effectuer qu'en vertu de Conventions spéciales conclues directement entre la Roumanie et les Puissances étrangères.

No. 58.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 190.)
My Lord,

Therapia, September 15, 1874.

I HAD been told that, speaking to some of my colleagues of the Roumanian Commercial Treaty question, General Ignatiew had conveyed to them the impression, that if Austria were to conclude one with the Principalities, his Government would do the same.

I therefore asked Aarifi Pasha, whether the Russian Ambassador had ever said anything of the kind to him.

The Pasha replied, that he had not absolutely said so, but that he had certainly allowed it to be inferred, that such would be the course of the Cabinet of St. Petersburgh; and he was aware that the Government of Germany would in all probability follow the example.

I asked whether this did not make him doubt the wisdom of refusing to make, at the request of a friendly Sovereign, a concession which would not injure the Porte, but would, on the contrary, save her from the possibility of seeing her wishes, or perhaps rights, summarily thrust aside.

I reminded him also, that the embarrassments with which this question threatened us, were greatly attributable to the denunciation of the Treaties of Commerce by the Porte, which had apparently been done with little consideration and reflection.

Before the step was taken, I had asked how it was proposed to deal with the Principalities in regard to it; but the subject was never seriously examined; and after the denunciation was officially made, it was found that, with regard to many of the Powers, no right of denunciation existed; and that with respect to the others, the period at which they were terminable had been mistaken.

Under these circumstances I asked whether it would not be better to revoke the notices so hastily given, by which the difficulty with regard to the Principalities might perhaps be adjourned.

Aarifi replied, that the Porte was aware of the objections made to the notice for the determination of the Treaties; and the question had been referred to the examination of a Commission, of which the Minister of Commerce was a Member, and upon its Report being made, a decision would be come to.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 59.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 191.)
My Lord,

Therapia, September 15, 1874.

IF, as I have intimated in my preceding despatch, there is reason to expect that the conclusion of a Commercial Treaty between Austria and the Principalities will be followed by others, by Germany and Russia, and if, as is possible, this is known to Prince Charles' Government, there is little prospect that any representations by the Governments which are disposed to support the rights of the Porte will be listened to.

An appeal to the Porte in the manner indicated in my despatch No. 184 of the 10th instant, to prevent British interests from being subjected to exceptionally unfavourable treatment, although certainly the only regular mode of proceeding, might, under those circumstances, become unadvisable, even though we were now to warn Prince Charles' Government that Her Majesty's Government considered that course open to them if they thought proper to adopt it when the time came.

Having stated that much to the Roumanian Government, it would, I think, be desirable to avoid, as far as may be practicable, further discussion of a question upon which our material interests are small, and with the chance of ultimately finding ourselves in a minority of the Powers and unable to make our views prevail.

Under the conviction that the best thing for all parties would be the acquiescence of the Porte in the wish of Austria, I shall continue to express that opinion to them as friendly and unobstrusive advice upon a question which the Sultan's Government is entitled to judge for itself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 60.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 42. Confidential.)
My Lord,

Bucharest, September 16, 1874.

IN a conversation yesterday with M. Zinoview, the Russian Agent and Consul-General here, I gathered from him that Russia, Germany, and Austria contemplate making a collective effort at Constantinople to induce the Porte to concede to the Principalities the commercial freedom they ask for. He feared the Porte might persist in its "ill-advised" resistance, in which case Austria and Russia would probably enter into direct commercial negotiations with the Principalities.

The support of these Powers will naturally strengthen the position of the Roumanian Government, indispose them to plead for favours, and render the eventual realization of their wishes more than probable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 61.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received September 28.)

(No. 207. Confidential.)
My Lord,

Vienna, September 24, 1874.

I HAVE inquired of Baron Hofmann whether Count Zichy, who has left for Constantinople, has received instructions to reopen immediately the question of Commercial Treaties with the Roumanian Government, and he answered, as he had formerly stated, that nothing would be done till General Ignatieff returned to his post, though the Government of the Emperor only intended to request the Porte to sanction their own wish to conclude such a Treaty with the Principalities, a mode of treating the question, which, he argued, would enable the Porte to give a favourable answer as an act of friendship and courtesy towards the Emperor. He mentioned at the same time that the Turkish Chargé d'Affaires has informed him that Raschid Pasha, who is now at Paris, is already in possession of a circular despatch from Constantinople

protesting against the conclusion of the proposed conventions, and that he had stated to the Chargé d'Affaires that, if the despatch was a confidential communication, Rashid Pasha had better seek an opportunity of reading it to Count Andrassy, as he himself did not wish to hear it, being unable to take the responsibility of expressing an opinion upon it, but of course if the despatch was an official communication, he must receive it, though he would strongly recommend Rashid Pacha to consider the consequences of delivering it, as it might receive an answer which would not be satisfactory to the Porte.

In speaking upon this subject Baron Hofmann observed that Roumania had been constituted in her present form against the wishes and advice of Austria; but such a State having been created on her frontier, she must establish the commercial relations with it which are indispensable to the interests of her subjects.

I said that it was not the question of establishing such relations, but the manner of doing so which was distasteful to the Porte, and that as the Roumanian Government were equally anxious, if not more so, than Austro-Hungary for the conclusion of Commercial Treaties, I could not believe that, if Count Andrassy insisted on their facilitating his negotiations at Constantinople by some modification of the attitude they have assumed as to their rights, that they would refuse to do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 62.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lytton.

(No. 562.) *Foreign Office, October 2, 1874.*

My Lord,

I HAVE received your Lordship's despatch No. 968, Confidential, of the 21st ultimo, reporting a conversation which you had held with the Duc Decazes on the subject of the Roumanian Tariff, and I have to inform you that I approve the language which you held to his Excellency on that occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 63.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 9.)

(No. 200. Confidential.) *Therapia, September 30, 1874.*

My Lord,

SINCE the return of Count Zichy to Constantinople his language has been calculated to remove the impression that the Austro-Hungarian Cabinet were disposed to push the question of their commercial relations with the Principalities with the energy that had been feared.

His Excellency has said to me that, seeing that the Roumanian Government had taken up the notion that the conclusion of Treaties with them was a matter of a pressing necessity for Austro-Hungary, he was determined to show that this was by no means the case, and he has, therefore, hitherto abstained altogether from opening the question with the Porte.

He makes no difficulty in recognizing the principle, which it was so important to maintain, that as long as the present Treaties with the Porte remain in force, there can be no right of concluding separate Conventions with the Principalities; but whether this was given as his own opinion, or that of his Government, I am unable to say.

An agreement with regard to the Custom-houses on the Austro-Hungarian frontier is the point to which he attaches the greatest importance; and I said that, as this appeared to come within the limits of the arrangements which the Porte admitted the right of the Principalities to make with the neighbouring States, I did not anticipate any insuperable objection to it being raised here.

I was able, also, to tell my colleague that, in my last conversations with Aarifi Pasha, I had remarked a decided disposition to be less stiff on this question than he had formerly appeared, and a greater disposition to recognize the full bearing of the separate Article annexed to the Austro-Ottoman Treaty of Commerce, although he

continued to insist, as I thought properly, that no Convention concluded with the Principalities could override the direct stipulations of the Treaties.

I mentioned to Count Zichy that during his absence I had used what influence I possessed in recommending the Porte to meet the wishes of Austria as far as she possibly could, and I felt satisfied that an impression had been produced which would be improved by the very conciliatory line which he was himself adopting.

Count Zichy commented with some asperity on the assertions which he understood the Roumanian Agent here to have made in reference to this question; he looked upon some of the provisions of the new Customs' Law as so contrary to the Treaties that it was impossible they should be allowed to come into operation, and he spoke of the necessity of convincing the Principalities that they were not to expect, of their own authority, to set aside the rights of others.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 64.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 12.)

(No. 7. Commercial.) *Bucharest, September 30, 1874.*

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 5, Commercial, of the 14th instant, I reported the steps which I and other of my colleagues had taken to claim the fulfilment of the engagements entered into in 1870 by the Roumanian Government and the foreign Consular Corps here for the annual revision of the Tariff of export dues by a mixed native and foreign Commission.

As the result of our proceedings, I have now the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a Circular note from M. Boerseo, by which, and as it is made to appear, through the spontaneous application of Roumanian law, we are invited to nominate foreign Delegates to assist the Roumanian Commissioners in revising the existing Tariff, but with the reservation that this Tariff will cease to have effect so soon as the one contemplated by the Customs' Law, voted in June last, and now in course of preparation, comes into operation.

Upon the receipt of this note a meeting of the Consular Corps was called by our Acting Doyen, the Russian Consul-General, when it was decided, as there was no time to lose, that we should name our Commissioners notwithstanding the assumption of the Government of the right to substitute their new Customs' Regulations when completed for the existing Tariff, but that this pretension should be met by a declaration reserving to our respective Governments full liberty of decision and action.

A note in this sense, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy, was accordingly addressed to the foreign Minister by our Doyen; and the Mixed Commission met on Monday last to revise the Tariff according to the annual custom.

I trust I have acted rightly in this matter, and I should be glad to know whether I am correct in thinking that the Roumanian Government will not in any case be justified in applying their new regulations without previous publication and a sufficient term of warning to foreign commerce of the changes in the Tariff?

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 64.

M. Boeresco to Mr. Vivian.

Bucarest, $\frac{13}{25}$ Septembre, 1874.

M. l'Agent,

AUX termes de l'Article 3 de la Loi du 2 Septembre, 1864, et conformément aux précédents des années passées concernant la révision annuelle du Tarif qui doit servir de base à la perception des droits de Douane pour l'exportation, j'ai l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance, M. l'Agent, que la Commission chargée de la dite révision se réunira dans l'Hôtel du Ministère des Finances, Lundi, $\frac{19}{1}$ Septembre courant, à une heure de l'après midi.

Il est bien entendu, toutefois, que les effets de ce Tarif cesseront lors de l'application des dispositions de la nouvelle Loi générale des Douanes promulguée le 15 Juin dernier.

En vous priant, M. l'Agent, de vouloir bien me communiquer les noms des délégués qui représenteront le commerce étranger au sein de la Commission précitée, je profite, &c.

(Signé) B. BOERESCO.

Inclosure 2 in No. 64.

M. Zinoview to M. Boeresco.

Bucarest, le $\frac{15}{27}$ Septembre, 1874.

M. le Ministre,

EN éxécution de l'accorde intervenu au mois de Juin 1870, et en réponse à la lettre circulaire que vous avez bien voulu nous adresser le $\frac{3}{15}$ courant à mes collègues et à moi, j'ai l'honneur de vous annoncer que le Corps Consulaire a désignés pour le représenter dans la Commission de Révision qui doit se réunir Lundi le $\frac{19}{28}$, MM. Déroussi, Serem, et Simondi, et comme suppléant en cas d'empêchement d'un des délégués ci-dessus M. Bruzzesi.

Quant à l'allusion de votre lettre relative à l'application eventuelle de la Loi des Douanes votée au mois de Juin dernier par les Chambres Roumaines, mes collègues n'ont pas cru avoir à émettre, pour le moment, d'opinion à cet égard, et ont exprimés le désir de réserver, sur cette question, la libre appréciation de leurs Gouvernements respectifs.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) ZINOVIEW.

No. 65.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received October* 12.)

(No. 45.)

Bucharest, October 3, 1874.

My Lord,

THE article of which I inclose a translation appeared in M. Boeresco's newspaper the "Pressa" of yesterday, and being, no doubt, written by the Minister himself, has attracted considerable notice here. It distinctly repudiates the application to the Principalities of the existing Treaties of Commerce between Turkey and the European Powers, with whom it claims the right of treating directly. It deprecates the futile opposition of the Porte to the claims of Roumania in the face of the strong support which she is receiving from Germany, Austria, and Russia, who are determined to negotiate directly with her. The Porte, it says, cannot even hope to enlist the other Great Powers permanently on her side against such a strong coalition, as France and Italy will probably soon come round, and England, who cannot afford to be left out in the cold, will also probably send instructions to her Representatives at Constantinople "to observe reserve and moderation."

The article proceeds to justify the new Customs law as an excellent administrative measure long required, and strictly within the competency of Roumania, and denies that it can be interpreted as any defiance or infraction of Treaties, inasmuch as neither Turkish Treaties nor Tariffs are recognized in the Principalities.

It states that those Powers who consent to treat directly with Roumania will naturally obtain special commercial advantages on condition of reciprocity, and denies the possibility of any Power attempting to impose by force the substitution of a Turkish tariff for one voted by the Chambers, which alone can have legal force in Roumania.

The article concludes by denying that the Roumanians are hostile to Turkey, or that they wish to defy her or to trouble the peace of the East; but their insistance on their claims is firm and unchangeable, and strong in the consciousness of their rights they are determined to regain them and to become a free nation, as they were when their ancestors concluded their Capitulations with the Porte.

The language of this article is very different from that held to me by M. Catargi, as reported to your Lordship in my despatches Nos. 35 and 40, but the change of tone is no doubt attributable partly to the return of M. Boeresco, but more to the conviction of the Government that they are certain of the support of Germany, Austria, and Russia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

Inclosure in No. 65.

Extract from the "Pressa."

LA POLITIQUE OTTOMANE.—Nous voyons avec un vif regret que la Porte Ottomane continue à frapper, presque chaque jour et à toute occasion, les droits d'autonomie des Roumains et leur indépendance administrative et législative. Si elle ne réussit toujours à atteindre son but, ce n'est pas sa faute; c'est que d'autres l'en empêchent.

Parmi les occasions choisies par elle pour blesser nos intérêts les plus légitimes, nous citerons en particulier la question des Traités de Commerce que la Roumanie revendique le droit de conclure directement avec les autres Puissances, droit que la Porte lui conteste. A voir ce qui se passe à Constantinople, on dirait que les hommes d'Etat de la Turquie sont exaspérés de ce que la Roumanie va réussir dans la réalisation de ses desseins. Tous les journaux étrangers, concordant avec nos propres informations, ont commencé à dire que quelques-unes des plus Grandes Puissances de l'Europe se sont déjà convaincues de la légitimité de nos droits et paraissent disposées à traiter directement avec nous: telles sont l'Autriche-Hongrie, la Russie, et l'Allemagne.

Que reste-t-il aux Ministres de la Sublime Porte en présence de la volonté de ces Grandes Puissances? Comment pourraient-ils empêcher leur action, surtout quand cette action est basée sur le droit et justifiée par des précédents historiques? Si du moins ils avaient la perspective de former un autre groupe de Grandes Puissances pour appuyer leur résistance! Mais cela même paraît infiniment peu probable. La France et l'Italie restent dans une réserve prudente, et rien ne nous interdit l'espérance que ces Puissances elles-mêmes ne finiront pas par se ranger du côté du droit et de l'équité, c'est-à-dire de la Roumanie.

Il semblerait que la Porte comptait sur l'Angleterre pour en faire le moteur d'une opposition plus accentuée à la reconnaissance de nos droits. Mais de ce côté encore, l'espoir commence à s'affaiblir. Le Cabinet de Londres, très-éclairé et très-pratique, ne peut fermer longtemps les yeux à la lumière; il ne peut pas non plus s'exposer à rester isolé; il est donc probable que, lui aussi, donnera à son Représentant à Constantinople des instructions qui lui imposent la réserve et la modération.

Nous avons donc l'espérance de voir bientôt, sous le règne du Prince Charles, la Roumanie exercer de nouveau un des droits les plus importants de la souveraineté nationale, celui de conclure directement des Traités avec les autres Puissances.

Ce droit, nous l'avons exercé pendant des siècles, et il n'était tombé en désuétude que sous le régime du phanar, alors que fut violée de la façon la plus odieuse l'autonomie de notre pays.

Tous les journaux affirment que la Roumanie et la Serbie vont conclure prochainement des Traités de Commerce avec les Etats voisins. Nous avons des raisons de croire qu'ils sont bien informés. Et cependant, à Constantinople, on a recours, nous assure-t-on, à toutes les armes pour empêcher cela. Réussira-t-on?

Nous nous rappelons la fameuse note circulaire du 24 Septembre, 1873, adressée à toutes les Puissances garantes par le Ministre Ottoman, et la réponse digne et ferme que fit à cette note le Gouvernement Roumain, à la date du 2 Novembre de la même année, réponse également communiquée à toutes les Grandes Puissances. Que gagna la Porte avec cette note, qui déniait à la Roumanie jusqu'à son existence politique et essayait de la réduire à la position d'une simple province Turque?

Elle ne gagna rien que le silence et l'indifférence de la part des Puissances et d'énergiques affirmations du droit de la part du Gouvernement Roumain.

Aujourd'hui la Turquie semble chercher d'autres voies pour atteindre son but. Il semble que la nouvelle loi douanière lui offre un terrain favorable. A l'entendre, les dispositions de cette loi seraient un défi porté par la Roumanie aux grandes Puissances; elle prétend que cette loi rompt les Traités de Commerce de la Turquie, où il est dit que ces Traités s'appliquent aussi aux Principautés; elle ajoute que la nouvelle loi tâche de forcer la main aux Puissances pour les empêcher de traiter avec nous.

Mais aucune de ces insinuations n'a de fondement. La loi douanière est une excellente loi d'administration intérieure, dont l'absence se faisait sentir depuis longtemps. Elle n'est ni un défi ni une menace pour personne; elle ne comprend que de simples mesures d'ordre, de comptabilité, et d'administration relatives à nos Douanes, ainsi que cela se pratique dans tous les autres Etats. Nous n'avions pas besoin de cette loi pour nous soustraire aux tarifs Turcs ou aux Traités de Commerce de la Turquie, puisque ni les uns ni les autres n'ont jamais été appliqués chez nous. C'est le

Gouvernement Roumain qui a toujours réglé ces questions, conformément aux intérêts du pays. Pourrait-il en être autrement à présent et à l'avenir?

Ce n'est pas donc sérieusement que l'on peut considérer cette loi comme un défi ou une menace pour qui que ce soit.

Sans doute que les Puissances qui contracteront des Traités de Commerce avec nous, ou des Traités de toute autre nature, jouiront d'avantages spéciaux à titre de réciprocité. Il peut fort bien arriver que, pour les pays qui auront traité avec nous, les tarifs soient moins élevés que les tarifs généraux; car, nous aussi, nous jouirons d'avantages équivalents. Mais c'est là une conséquence naturelle des Traités dans tous les pays du monde.

Les Etats qui voudront avoir chez nous une position privilégiée n'auront qu'à s'entendre avec nous pour obtenir des avantages analogues à ceux que nous leur demanderons à notre tour. Et comment pourrait-il en être autrement? Nous serions curieux de voir un Etat qui, dans une Conférence diplomatique, a reconnu notre autonomie venir, les armes à la main, nous imposer des tarifs Turcs au lieu de ceux qu'aurait votés le Parlement Roumain. Si cela se pouvait, nous aurions au moins pour excuse de n'avoir cédé qu'à la force.

Mais cela ne sera pas. Car aujourd'hui tout le monde sait, positivement et sans l'ombre du doute, que les Roumains ne reconnaissent pas et n'appliqueront jamais un Traité de Commerce conclu entre la Turquie et une autre Puissance. Ils n'appliqueront que les règlements et les tarifs votés par les autorités législatives locales, ou les dispositions des Traités de Commerce conclus par eux avec les autres Etats. Tous les autres Traités sont, à leurs yeux, *res inter alios acta*.

Les droits de la Roumanie sont clairs et positifs; il sont affirmés par leurs anciennes Capitulations et par les Traités modernes; ils sont consacrés par le long usage du temps; la décision des Roumains est donc ferme et immuable. Nous avons la certitude qu'elle sera respectée.

Ce n'est point à dire que nous voulions troubler la paix de l'Orient ni attaquer la Sublime Porte. Nous ne sommes point les adversaires de la Turquie, nous ne lui souhaitons que du bien. Nous ne défions ni ne menaçons personne. Mais comme une nation, modeste, il est vrai, mais forte de la conscience de son droit, nous voulons successivement reconquérir tous nos droits basés sur les Traités; nous voulons maintenir et consolider notre existence politique et sociale; nous voulons être un Etat, une nation libre, comme nous l'avons été alors que nos ancêtres ont conclu de gré à gré leurs Capitulations avec la Sublime Porte.

Sur ce terrain nous serons toujours forts. C'est en vain qu'à Constantinople on s'efforce d'entraver l'exercice de nos droits; on ne réussira pas.

No. 66.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received October* 12.)

(No. 289. Confidential.) *Vienna, October* 8, 1874.

My Lord,

WITH reference to Mr. Vivian's despatch No. 45, of the 3rd instant, inclosing an article from the Bucharest "Pressa," on the subject of the proposed Commercial Treaties, I think it right to inform your Lordship that M. Costoforo, the Roumanian Agent here, held similar language to me in a private conversation a few days ago, when he called upon me previously to his departure on leave of absence for Bucharest.

There can be little doubt, therefore, that the Government of Prince Charles consider the question of these Treaties, although they will, I believe, be restricted to mere Conventions between the Governments, similar to those already existing with regard to ports, telegraphs, and railways, as a first step towards securing eventually the position of an independent neutral state similar to Belgium; and I have reason to believe that the views of Prince Charles and his Ministers on this subject are not considered by all the foreign Representatives at his Court unreasonable or unlikely to be realized.

The Government of the Principalities assume that the Treaty of Paris secured to them rights which they had not exercised for at least a century, and they are now determined to do nothing which can invalidate this assumption.

There is no probability, therefore, of their asking the Porte to grant them a right to make Commercial Treaties; and if the Porte refuses to concede it to them without

such a request being made, it seems equally probable that the Treaties will be made without the assent of the Sultan.

From Sir Henry Elliot's correspondence, copies of which were inclosed in your Lordship's despatch No. 169 of the 23rd ultimo, his Excellency seems to think that the Government of Prince Charles might be influenced by an intimation that Her Majesty's Government, who will not enter into Commercial Treaties with them without the assent of the Sultan, would consider themselves entitled to appeal to the Porte for the enforcement of the stipulations of their Treaty of Commerce with Turkey, in the event of their being violated in Roumania.

I am not aware how far, in such a case, the Porte would have the means of coercing the Principalities by suspending commercial privileges which they enjoy in Turkey; but I presume they could not employ such means of coercion without injuring their own subjects; and I do not see how they could have recourse to any others, considering the manner in which the Principalities are protected against armed intervention on the part of Turkey.

It would seem, therefore, that if Her Majesty's Government cannot by their own influence at Bucharest induce the Government of Prince Charles to acknowledge the rights of the Sultan in this question, or, at all events, to respect those of Great Britain in Roumania, they are not likely to attain those objects by calling upon the Porte to enforce the stipulations of its Commercial Treaty with Great Britain in the parts of the Principalities, and that the Government of Prince Charles will remain stedfast to the policy under which they are now acting, and will be as successful in carrying it out as they have been in imposing their will upon Turkey and the guaranteeing Powers on previous occasions when they claimed privileges not contemplated by the framers of the Treaty of Paris.

In my confidential despatch No. 267, of the 24th ultimo, I mentioned that a despatch was said to have arrived for Reschid Pacha, instructing him to protest against the conclusion of the proposed Conventions; but I now learn from Baron Hofmann that, though Reschid Pacha has spoken to him on the subject, he has not communicated any written document, and Baron Hofmann therefore presumes that, if it had been intended to make a communication of the kind to the Austro-Hungarian Government, the intention has been abandoned; and he speaks of the reception of Count Zichy by the Sultan as most satisfactory, and as affording every prospect of the request which will be addressed to the Porte by Austria being considered in a conciliatory spirit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 67.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 185.) *Foreign Office, October* 13, 1874.

My Lord,

YOUR Excellency is aware that the Roumanian Government is persistently urging its claim to the right of making Commercial Treaties without obtaining the sanction of the Porte as Suzerain Power.

Everything seems to indicate that it is now intended to put the theory into practice, and that Commercial Treaties will shortly be negotiated without any reference to the Ottoman Government. It is improbable that the latter will tacitly concede a right which it has invariably denied to the Principalities, and a collision may become inevitable which will call for action, or at least for decided expressions of opinion, on the part of the Powers who were parties to the Treaty of 1856. Under these circumstances, it will shortly be incumbent upon the Powers to pronounce themselves, if at least an attempt is to be made to avert a crisis which could not fail to be immensely deplored.

I should therefore wish your Excellency to endeavour to obtain from Herr von Bülow a statement of the policy which the German Government will adopt with regard to this question.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 68.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 183.) *Foreign Office, October* 14, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 191 of the 15th ultimo, respecting the intention of Roumania to conclude Commercial Treaties with foreign Powers, and the encouragement which appears to be given to this scheme by Russia, Austria, and Germany.

Her Majesty's Government entirely approve the language which your Excellency proposes to hold to the Porte upon this subject. They are convinced that the pretentions of Roumania are inconsistent with the terms of existing Treaties, and they cannot readily bring themselves to believe that any of the Powers who were parties to the Treaty of Paris would consent to a breach of that important international agreement.

Should it, however, appear probable that any of the great Powers would disregard the stipulations of that Treaty with respect to the authority of the Porte in the Principalities, an event which might give rise to the most serious complications, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the Porte would do well to consider how far it might be possible to make such harmless concessions to the Government of Roumania with respect to Commercial Treaties as should satisfy the United Provinces and the Powers who might support them, and at the same time raise stronger barriers against the agitation for political independence so unadvisedly entered upon by Prince Charles and his Councillors.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 69.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 19.)

(No. 237.) *Berlin, October* 16, 1874.

My Lord,

IN obedience to your Lordship's instruction No. 185 of the 13th instant, that I should endeavour to obtain from Herr von Bülow a statement of the policy the German Government will adopt in regard to the right claimed by the Roumanian Government to make Commercial Treaties without obtaining the sanction of the Porte as Suzerain Power, I have the honour to state in reply that I gather from a conversation I have had on the subject with his Excellency, that the German Government consider the wish of the Roumanian Government to make their own Commercial Treaties themselves a reasonable one; and that they do not think the principle of Suzerainty would be affected by the Turkish Government making such concessions to the Roumanian Government as would meet their desire for improved commercial relations with other countries.

The German Government has, in reality, no direct interest in the matters beyond that of the maintenance of peace in Europe; they think the question should not be allowed to assume a political character, either as regards Turkey or Roumania; but they are inclined, if Turkey sees fit, to appeal to the Powers to side with their friend and ally Austria in backing up the wish of Roumania for commercial, though never for political independence.

From private information just received, I understand that Count Andrassy is at present in communication with the Russian Government on this subject, and that it is thought probable the Russian Government will act in concert with Austria and Germany in favour of Roumania.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 70.

Aarifi Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, October 24.)

(Communication Confidentielle.)

(Dépêche Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 22 Octobre*, 1874.

NOUS venons de recevoir des Premiers Drogmans des Ambassades d'Autriche, de l'Allemagne, et de Russie, à Constantinople, communication d'une instruction identique de leurs chefs, d'après laquelle ces trois Puissances, se basant sur leur intérêt matériel et sur la position des Principautés, déclarent avoir le droit de conclure avec elles des arrangements directs et spéciaux de douane, de tarifs, et de commerce. En présence d'une déclaration si inattendue et si peu conforme à l'esprit des actes solennels qui définissent l'autonomie administrative des Principautés, je m'adresse à votre Excellence pour voir s'il n'y a pas moyen de provoquer une démarche de la part du Cabinet de St. James, en vue d'empêcher que la question, ainsi soulevée par les trois Cabinets, soit placée sur tout autre terrain que celui des Traités. Les assurances que nous avons reçues, tant par votre entremise que par celle de Sir Henry Elliot, ne laissent aucun doute dans notre esprit sur la ferme résolution du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique de s'associer à nous dans la sauvegarde des droits consacrés par les actes internationaux; seulement, nous désirerions voir cet accord revêtir, dans la pratique, une forme plus active et plus immédiate. Nous attachons un prix d'autant plus grand à l'action du Gouvernement Royal que nous comptons beaucoup sur l'effet de ses démarches, notamment à Vienne. Car, les appréciations favorables de la presse Autrichienne, jointes à certaines autres particularités, nous autorisent à croire qu'en cette circonstance le Cabinet de Vienne, loin de s'inspirer des traditions de la politique nationale, se laisse plutôt influencer dans ses résolutions. Autrement, il serait difficile d'admettre que l'intérêt commercial ait pu seul déterminer une démarche dans laquelle nous croyons remarquer un changement de front, et un parti pris d'étendre sous une forme différente aux Principautés les concessions accordées au Khidiv.

On est en train de se jeter à Vienne, à Berlin, et à St. Pétersbourg, dans une entreprise qui, manquant de base légale, laissera la porte ouverte à bien des complications futures. Peut-être est-il encore temps de conjurer le danger. Nous aimons à espérer que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, appréciant l'importance de l'affaire, voudra bien employer ses bons offices auprès des trois Cabinets pour les faire revenir sur leur décision. Il est à peine besoin d'ajouter qu'une pareille démarche, sans compter qu'elle rendrait un grand service à la cause de la conservation des Traités, répondrait aux intérêts économiques de la Grande Bretagne, qui ne sauraient assurément marcher d'accord avec ceux des Puissances voisines de monopoliser entre leurs mains le commerce extérieur des Principautés.

No. 71.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 23, 2:30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, October* 23, 1874, 10·45 A.M.

THE Austrian, Russian, and German Embasies have made, through their Dragomans, a simultaneous communication about Treaties of Commerce.

They avoid discussing the question of the right of the Principalities to conclude such Treaties, and the communication is courteous and moderate, but they assert that the position of the Principalities makes it necessary, and their privileges entitle them, to make their own arrangements with reference to Custom-houses and Tariffs.

No. 72.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 25.)

(No. 228. Confidential.) *Therapia, October* 13, 1874.

My Lord,

NOTWITHSTANDING the moderation of the language which I have already reported Count Zichy to hold with regard to the commercial negotiations with the Roumanian Principalities, I must profess myself unable very clearly to discover the line which the Austro-Hungarian Government propose to follow on the question.

I mentioned to him a few days ago that I had endeavoured to tranquillize the Porte in reference to an impression that he had only been waiting for the return of the Russian Ambassador to open a discussion upon it, with the concurrence not only of the General, but also with that of the German Ambassador.

Count Zichy's answer showed that this apprehension was not altogether without foundation, for he said that his two colleagues were instructed to support the views of his Government.

He proposed, however, simply to put the Porte in full possession of the position in which the commercial relations of Austro-Hungary with the Principalities stood, and to show how necessary it is that means should be afforded of putting them on a better footing; but he declared that there was nothing approaching to an intention on the part of his Government of at present entering into or inviting negotiations; and he would, above all, avoid asserting the existence of any right on the part of the Principalities to make Commercial Treaties or to repudiate those which exist.

Count Zichy appears to be labouring under an uncomfortable consciousness that, while his Government would not be justified in making direct Conventions with the Principalities, without the consent of the Porte, they will not be deterred, by a mere consideration for the rights of the Sultan, from acting as they think most conducive to their own immediate interests.

Baron Hofmann's language, as reported in Sir Andrew Buchanan's despatch No. 255, seems to betray the same feeling.

His Excellency makes no difficulty in recognizing that the right of concluding Treaties does not at present reside with the Principalities; but it is not equally apparent that he admits as a necessary sequence that other Powers can, in that case, have no better right to make Treaties with them.

Baron Hofmann observed to Sir Andrew Buchanan that if the Porte did not accept Count Andrassy's proposals, Russia might probably conclude a Commercial Treaty with Prince Charles' Government; and he asked whether the guaranteeing Powers would protest, or the Porte prevent it from being carried into execution.

The argument appears to me scarcely to merit much attention, for should the Sultan's Government be powerless to prevent Russia from carrying out such a Treaty —as they have freely admitted to me that they would be if the Treaty should be made by Austria—it is probable that some, at least, of the Guaranteeing Powers would protest against what they hold to be a violation of the rights of the Porte.

Should, however, the case foreseen by Baron Hofmann occur, its effects would be far less injurious than if the Treaty were to be made by Austria.

The policy of Russia towards Turkey is well known to everyone, and a step taken by her in antagonism to the interests of Turkey would be looked upon as being only in accordance with her constant and traditional aim.

But with Austria the case is widely different; for there is still here a hope, which I have done my best to foster, that she may be regarded as favourable to the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire on the conditions defined by the Treaties, and anything which tends to weaken this hope I should regard as a political misfortune.

For the last three years Austria has been unconsciously playing the part of Russia, and has herself contrived to inspire at the Porte a distrust which the constant efforts of the Russian Embassy—as more than once mentioned to me both by the Sultan and by his Ministers—had failed to create, and the conclusion of a Treaty of Commerce with the Principalities, in spite of the protest of the Porte, would go far to confirm it.

That Russia would herself make a Treaty with the Principalities, as expected by Baron Hofmann, is improbable, if we may judge by the late policy of that Power, which is far more cautious and astute than that of Austria.

The latter has endeavoured on all occasions to assert herself, and to exhibit to the public her influence over the Porte; but the former, while labouring out of sight to sap the foundations of the Empire, has of late scrupulously abstained from any overt or public act calculated to awaken distrust.

Between players of such unequal strength—the one cool and calculating, satisfied with a gradual though distant success, and the other vain and impetuous, aiming at an immediate triumph—it is not difficult to foresee on which side the ultimate advantage will lie.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 73.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 27.)

(No. 245. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, October 18, 1874.*

I HAVE been told confidentially by one of my colleagues, who said he wished to ascertain the truth of it from myself, that the Russian Ambassador represents me as recommending the Porte to send an Imperial Commissioner to Bucharest to remonstrate with Prince Charles' Government on the subject of the projected Treaties of Commerce.

I said that I had not only never recommended such a proceeding, but that I had not even heard it talked of; that it would, in my opinion, be an injudicious course for the Porte to adopt, as the question now stands, and I should endeavour to dissuade them from doing so if consulted upon it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 74.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 27.)

(No. 10. Commercial.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, October 10, 1874.*

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 5 and 7, Commercial, of the 14th and 30th ultimo, respecting the revision of the Roumanian Tariff by a Mixed Commission, I have the honour to acquaint your Lordship that the Commissioners have not found it necessary to make any changes in the existing Tariff, which will, therefore, be maintained, and they have signed a *procès-verbal* to that effect.

We have thus carried our point in maintaining the annual revision of the Tariff by a Mixed Commission, while we have fully reserved the rights of our respective Governments to act as they think proper with respect to the new Roumanian Customs Regulations whenever this Government, having completed their Tariff upon which they are now busily engaged, seek to apply them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 75.

Musurus Pasha to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 30.)

(Particulière.)
My Lord *Ambassade Impériale Ottomane, Londres, le 26 Octobre,* 1874.

PAR l'entremise de Lord Tenterden j'ai communiqué à votre Excellence la teneur d'une dépêche télégraphique que j'ai reçue de Constantinople au sujet de la démarche identique faite auprès de la Sublime Porte par les Ambassades d'Allemagne, d'Autriche-Hongrie, et de Russie, relativement à l'intention de ces trois Puissances de conclure directement des Traités de Commerce avec les Principautés Unis de Moldavie et de Valachie, ainsi qu'avec la Principauté de Servie.

Dans une de mes dernières entrevues, je disais à votre Excellence qu'il m'était impossible de croire que ces trois Puissances, dont la politique est basée sur des principes conservateurs, voulussent participer à une infraction flagrante aux Traités, et se rendre complices des tendances séparatistes et révolutionnaires d'un certain parti dans les Principautés. Ainsi, votre Excellence peut juger de l'étonnement qu'a dû causer au Gouvernement Impérial une démarche d'autant plus inattendue, qu'il semblerait que ces Puissances ont perdu de vue qu'un Traité de Commerce conclu directement avec les Principautés est, en présence surtout de la protestation de la Sublime Porte, un acte illégal, dépourvu par conséquent de toute valeur et n'engageant ni la Puissance Suzeraine ni les Principautés elles-mêmes.

Dans l'instruction identique donnée par les trois Ambassadeurs à leurs premiers Drogmans, et communiquée par ceux-ci à son Excellence Aarifi Pacha, il est déclaré que les trois Puissances ont le droit de conclure directement des Traités de Commerce

avec les Principautés. Je me permettrai de faire observer que ce qui indique que ces Puissances sentent elles-mêmes qu'elles n'ont pas ce droit, c'est que, dans l'instruction précitée, au lieu de la dénomination de Traités de Commerce, on a eu soin d'employer les mots "arrangements de douane, de tarifs, et de commerce," comme si un changement des mots pouvait changer le caractère et la nature d'un acte international; en effet, un arrangement international de douane, de tarifs, et de commerce n'est que la définition exacte d'un Traité de Commerce. Si ces Puissances avaient un tel droit elles l'auraient exercé antérieurement; or, il n'y a pas d'exemple qu'un Traité ou Convention, ou même, si l'on veut, un arrangement de commerce, ait été conclu directement par une Puissance étrangère avec les Principautés à aucune époque depuis des siècles. D'ailleurs, cette question n'est pas sujette à discussion du moment que, dans l'Article VIII de la Convention de 1858, il a été explicitement stipulé que les Traités internationaux qui seront conclus par la Cour Suzeraine avec les Puissances étrangères seront applicables aux Principautés comme par le passé.

Les trois Puissances motivent leur désir de conclure des Traités de Commerce avec les Principautés sur leur intérêt matériel et la position de ces provinces. Mais la Sublime Porte offre de prêter son concours à l'admission de toute disposition spéciale que les Principautés jugeraient nécessaire pour leur commerce international.

Quant aux concessions octroyées à Son Altesse le Khidiv d'Égypte, et qu'on semble invoquer en faveur de la prétention des Principautés, il importe de remarquer qu'il n'y a pas d'assimilation entre celles-ci et l'Egypte. L'autonomie administrative des Principautés a été définitivement déterminée par des stipulations d'actes internationaux, et aucune modification ne saurait être apportée à ces stipulations sans le consentement des Puissances Contractantes, tandis que l'organisation administrative de l'Égypte est basée sur les lois de l'Empire, et que toute modification à y apporter émane exclusivement de l'autorité de la Sublime Porte. Du reste, les concessions auxquelles on fait allusion ont été accordées par Firman Impérial; il faut, cependant, considérer que l'Egypte est une province dont la population est, par sentiment national, dévouée à Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, et dont l'administration ne s'est jamais permis des infractions aux dispositions des Firmans Impériaux, et a su mériter toute la confiance du Gouvernement Impérial.

La Sublime Porte, ayant respecté loyalement les stipulations consignées dans les Traités qu'elle a conclus avec les autres Puissances, ses amies et alliées, a le droit de s'attendre à ce que ces Puissances les observent de leur côté avec la même sollicitude. En insistant sur ce droit, elle invoque un principe qui constitue la base fondamentale de tout acte international, et d'après lequel aucune Puissance ne peut se délier des engagements d'un Traité, ni en modifier les stipulations, qu'à la suite de l'assentiment des Parties Contractantes, au moyen d'une entente amicale—principe d'autant plus sacré à ses yeux qu'il a été consigné dans un acte solennel annexé au Protocole de la première séance de la Conférence tenue à Londres en 1871.

Les observations qui précèdent ne sont qu'un développement de la teneur de la dépêche télégraphique précitée; et j'ai la certitude que votre Excellence, pénétrée de l'importance de cette question, voudra bien accueillir favorablement l'appel qui y est fait à l'appui amical et efficace de la Grande Bretagne, en vue de prévenir la consommation d'un acte qui, vu surtout la forme dont on veut le revêtir, porterait une grave atteinte aux Traités et, ainsi que le fait observer son Excellence Aarifi Pacha, laisserait la Porte ouverte à bien des complications futures.

Si j'ai pris la liberté d'adresser à votre Excellence la présente lettre particulière, c'est que son absence ne m'a pas permis de l'entretenir personnellement d'une question aussi pressante. Aussi la prié-je de considérer les observations contenues dans cette lettre comme lui ayant été faites verbalement.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) MUSURUS.

No. 76.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received October 30, at night.)

Therapia, October 30, 1874, 1·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Porte has answered the identic communication of the Austrian, German, and Russian Ambassadors on the subject of the right of the Principalities to conclude

* Sent to Lord Lytton.

Commercial Conventions with foreign Powers in the shape of an instruction to the Ottoman Representatives (at ?) those three Courts.

In that document, of which copy will be sent by post, the Porte, far from recognizing any such rights, shows little disposition to adhere to the views expressed by the three Powers, but insinuates that a direct application to the Suzerain Power from the Vassal Government might lead to the practical result which it is sought to obtain.

No. 77.

The Earl of Derby to Musurus Pasha.

Dear Musurus Pasha, *Foreign Office, October 30, 1874.*

I HAVE to thank your Excellency for your letter marked "particulière" of the 26th instant, and the telegram from your Government which you were so good as to communicate to me on the 24th instant, respecting the action taken at the Porte by the Representatives of Austria, Germany, and Russia upon the affairs of Roumania.

In reply, I have the honour to assure your Excellency that the contents of your communication shall receive the careful attention of Her Majesty's Government

Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia do not possess authority to conclude Commercial Treaties with foreign Powers, and concur with the Porte that such Treaties, if entered into, would be in violation of existing Treaty engagements. At the same time Her Majesty's Government have not hesitated to advise the Porte to make such timely concessions as might serve to remove any substantial grievance on the part of the Principalities, so far as that can be done without injury to the political integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

Her Majesty's Government cannot pledge themselves to any definite course of action in regard to the joint representation addressed to the Porte by the Governments of Austria, Russia, and Germany, as reported in the telegraphic despatch which your Excellency has communicated to me. I have no doubt that a copy of this document will shortly be received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and when they are in possession of it, Her Majesty's Government will be better able to judge how the case stands.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 78.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 203.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, October 31, 1874.*

THE Turkish Ambassador called at the Foreign Office on the 24th instant, and communicated to me the inclosed copy of a telegram which he had received from Aarifi Pasha respecting the action of the Representatives of Austria, Germany, and Russia in the affairs of Roumania.*

In making this communication he reminded me that on a former occasion he had stated that he could not bring himself to believe that the three Powers whose policy was based on Conservative principles, could take part in a flagrant infraction of the Treaty, and become accomplices in the revolutionary tendency of a certain party in the Principalities. I might therefore judge of the astonishment felt by his Government by the late unexpected communications to the Porte, by which it would seem that the Powers had lost sight of the fact that a Treaty of Commerce concluded directly with the Principalities, is, in presence moreover of a protest from the Porte, an illegal not destitute of all value, and not binding on either the Suzerain or the Principalities themselves.

His Excellency further remarked that in the identic instructions given by the three Ambassadors to their dragomans, and communicated by them to Aarifi Pasha, it was declared that the three Powers have the right to conclude Treaties of Commerce direct with the Principalities, whilst in the same instruction, instead of using the term Treaties of Commerce, they have been careful to make use of the expressions "arrangements de douane, de tarifs, et de commerce," as though a mere change of

* No. 76.

words could alter the character and nature of an international act; in fact, an international arrangement of customs, of tariffs, and of commerce is an exact definition of a Treaty of Commerce.

If the Powers had such a right they would have exercised it previously, now there is no instance of a Treaty of Commerce, or even a commercial arrangement which has been concluded direct by a foreign Power with the Principalities at any period for centuries past. Added to which this question is not open to discussion since the VIIIth Article of the Convention of 1858 explicitly provided that the International Treaties which might be concluded by the Suzerain Power with foreign Powers, should be applicable to the Principalities as before.

The three Powers base their desire to conclude Treaties of Commerce with the Principalities upon the plea of their material interests and of the position of those Provinces. But the Porte offers to give its concurrence to the admission of any special arrangement which the Principalities may judge necessary in furtherance of their international commerce.

With regard to the concessions allowed to the Khedive of Egypt, and which seem to be invoked in favour of the pretensions of the Principalities, Musurus Pasha remarked that there was no comparison between the two cases. The administrative autonomy of the Principalities has been definitely determined by the provisions of international Acts, and no modifications can be made in those provisions without the consent of the Contracting Powers, whilst the administrative organization of Egypt is based upon the laws of the Empire, and any modification required emanates exclusively from the authority of the Sultan; besides which, the concessions alluded to have been sanctioned by an Imperial Firman. It must also be remembered that Egypt is a Province, the population of which is devoted to the Sultan, and of which the administrative Government has never allowed the infraction of Imperial Firmans, and has, consequently, merited the entire confidence of the Imperial Government.

His Excellency added that the Porte, having loyally respected the provisions contained in her Treaties with foreign Powers, had a right to expect that those Powers would be equally anxious to observe them on their side.

In insisting on this right the Porte invokes the principle which constitutes the foundation of every international act, and according to which no Power can liberate itself from the engagements of a Treaty nor modify the stipulations thereof unless with the consent of the Contracting Powers by means of an amicable arrangement—a principle which the Porte regarded as all the more sacred inasmuch as it had been laid down in a solemn Act annexed to the 1st Protocol of the Conference held in London in 1871.

His Excellency concluded by expressing his fervent hope that Her Majesty's Government would grant the friendly support sought for in the telegram from Aarifi Pasha, with the object of putting a stop to an act which, in whatever light it might be viewed, would deal a grave blow to Treaties, and would open the door to many future complications.

I stated to the Turkish Ambassador in reply, that the observations which he had addressed to me, and the telegraphic despatch which he had been good enough to communicate, should receive the careful attention of Her Majesty's Government.

Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia did not possess authority to conclude Commercial Treaties with Foreign Powers, and concurred with the Porte that such Treaties, if entered into, would be in violation of existing Treaty engagements. At the same time, Her Majesty's Government had not hesitated to advise the Porte to make such timely concessions as might serve to remove any substantial grievance on the part of the Principalities, so far as that could be done without injury to the political integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

Her Majesty's Government could not pledge themselves to any definite course of action in regard to the joint representation addressed to the Porte by the Governments of Austria, Russia, and Germany, as reported in the telegraphic despatch which his Excellency had communicated to me. I did not doubt that a copy of that document would shortly be received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, and, when they were in possession of it, Her Majesty's Government would be better able to judge how the case stood.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 79.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received November 2.*)

(No. 255.) *Berlin, October 31, 1874.*

My Lord,

COUNT MUNSTER is about to return to his post, and hopes to reach London on Wednesday next, the 4th of November. His Excellency is the bearer of friendly messages from Prince Bismarck to your Lordship, among which is one respecting Roumania. The Chancellor, it appears, desires to assure your Lordship that, while admitting the right of the Roumanians to negotiate new Tariffs, his policy towards Turkey remains unchanged.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 80.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received November 3, 6:50 P.M.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, November 3, 1874, 4:15 P.M.*

THE note referred to in your telegram from Constantinople has been received at Vienna, and it is thought satisfactory, as the Porte consents not to appeal to the Treaty Powers.

No. 81.

*Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.**—(*Received November 3.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, November 3, 1874.*

THE Turkish Ambassador communicated yesterday to Count Andrassy the despatch referred to in your telegram received last night.

His Excellency said he would answer it through Count Zichy, but that he must decline making a proposal to the Roumanian Government which he knew would be rejected.

No. 82.

Lord Lytton to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received November 4.*)

(No. 1,072.) *Paris, November 3, 1874.*

My Lord,

I HAVE read to the Duc Decazes Sir H. Elliot's telegram to your Lordship of the 2nd instant, reporting the reply of the Porte to the Austrian, German, and Russian Governments respecting the claim of the Roumanian Government to contract Commercial Treaties independently of the Suzerain Power, and I have asked his Excellency if he has yet received similar information from the French Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople.

The Duke replied that he had not, but he highly approved the answer of the Porte, as described by Sir H. Elliot in his Excellency's above-mentioned telegram. The Treaty, as well as the Sovereign rights of the Sultan in this matter, he considered incontestable; but the Porte had, he thought, been wisely counselled to invite a direct appeal to the Suzerain Power from the Vassal Government, and to evince its disposition to entertain favourably such an appeal if it were made.

He did not think the Sultan's Government could be expected to go beyond this. At any rate, France was bound to support the Porte in the position which her Government had now taken on this question, and he was pleased to know that Turkey might reckon upon similar support from England.

His Excellency then read to me the communication which Count Jarnac had received from your Lordship on this subject, and said that it had caused him great

* Sent to Sir H. Elliot.

satisfaction, as he entirely agreed in every one of the opinions therein expressed on behalf of Her Majesty's Government.

I have also seen the Turkish Ambassador this afternoon. Ali Pacha, confirming the information telegraphed to your Lordship by Sir H. Elliot, declares that if the sanction of the Suzerain Power is properly asked for by the Government of the Principalities, he feels sure that it will not be withheld.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYTTON.

No. 83.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 5.)

(No. 256.)
My Lord, *Therapia, October 23, 1874.*

YESTERDAY the German, Austrian, and Russian Ambassadors made simultaneously, through their dragomans, a communication to the Porte upon the subject of the commercial arrangements with the Principalities.

They have avoided exciting the susceptibilities of the Porte by an identic note, or indeed by any written document, and their representation is stated to be courteous and moderate, and to disclaim all intention of raising the question of the right of the Principalities to conclude commercial Treaties.

At the same time they assert the opinion of their Governments that the geographical position of the Principalities, and the privileges secured to them, entitle them, and render it necessary for them to make, with foreign Governments, the commercial arrangements concerning the custom-houses and tariff which they may find requisite.

The Austrian Ambassador earnestly bespoke my support, and the exercise of the influence, which he believed me to possess at the Porte, to induce the Turkish Government to give a favourable answer.

I told him that I had, two days before, had a conversation with Aarifo Pasha, whom I had urged to meet the wishes of the Austro-Hungarian Government, as far as was compatible with the rights of the Sultan, and of the other Governments having Treaties with His Majesty.

I had represented that, as far as custom-house arrangements were concerned, I did not see that the Porte need hesitate to declare that they came within the limits of the agreements which the Principalities had already been authorised to make with the neighbouring States, and the Porte might also, I thought, without risk or inconvenience declare that it would not object to any adjustment of the tariff, not in contradiction with the conditions of the Treaties of commerce.

If the maximum of 8 per cent. upon imports laid down in the Treaties was not exceeded, which would entitle other Governments to remonstrate, the Principalities might fairly be allowed to make such arrangements as they liked with the Austro-Hungarian Government.

Such was the advice I had given to the Porte, and I told Count Zichy that it would be impossible for me to go further.

I observed to Count Zichy that the cooperation of the German Ambassador rather weakened the argument which I had used with the Porte, for the privilege granted to Prince Charles upon his investiture, was that of making arrangements of local interest, such as those connected with the custom-houses might be considered to be with the neighbouring States, which put Austria and Russia in a different position from Germany.

Baron Werther, in speaking to me of the step he had taken with his two colleagues stated very fairly that his Government had no direct interest in the question, but in consequence of the relations now subsisting between them and Austro-Hungary, they had come forward to support the latter in a matter to which it seemed to attach great value, and he further intimated, although this had not been hinted to the Porte, that it was perfectly understood that Austria would act as she believed that her interests required, whatever might be the decision of the Sultan's Government.

I said that it was precisely because this was believed, that Prince Charles' Government considered themselves to be masters of the situation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 84.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 5.)

(No. 257. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, October 23, 1874.*

SINCE writing my despatch No. 256, I have been furnished with the inclosed copy of the instruction of the German Ambassador to his first Dragoman, which was communicated two days ago to the Porte, on the subject of the commercial arrangements with the Danubian Principalities.

It will be found, I believe, much what I had represented it in that despatch, and it calls, therefore, for little further comment; but I would invite your Lordship's attention to the declaration that the German Government cannot allow material interests to be sacrifled to purely formal considerations.

As I have before remarked, Germany having scarcely any commercial interests in the Principalities, the considerations upon which she acts must be held to be entirely political.

It might be regarded as a question of pure form whether the understanding to be come to between Austria and the Principalities was to be fixed by an arrangement not ratified by the Prince or by a regular Convention, but if the unratified arrangement is intended to override the plain provisions of the Treaties of Commerce, it is evident that something more than a question of form is at stake.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

Inclosure in No. 84.

Instructions addressed by the German Ambassador at the Porte to his First Dragoman, October 20, 1874.

VOUS n'ignorez pas que la question du droit des Principautés Vassales de conclure des Conventions Commerciales avec les Puissances étrangères a surgi de fait dès la dénonciation des Traités de Commerce par la Sublime Porte. La Roumanie, interprétant en faveur de ce droit les Traités qui assurent son autonomie, a déjà promulgué une loi intérieure qui modifie considérablement, à date du 1er Janvier, 1875, les dispositions douanières existantes.

Les intérêts matériels importants engagés dans cette question obligent le Cabinet Impérial à prendre une détermination pratique.

Nous ne voulons, en le faisant, ni affaiblir ni resserrer les liens qui unissent les Principautés Vassales à la Cour Suzeraine. Nous entendons, au contraire, ne leur porter aucune atteinte. Mais la position géographique de ces Principautés, et les institutions particulières qui les régissent, ne permettent pas de les assimiler aux autres provinces sujettes de l'Empire Ottoman. Elles jouissent de privilèges spéciaux et d'une autonomie intérieure qui entraînent des relations de douanes et de commerce avec les autres pays. Les Puissances dont les sujets se trouvent en contact avec ces Principautés doivent nécessairement tenir compte de ces considérations.

Sans entrer en controverse sur le point de droit impliqué dans la présente circonstance, il suffit de constater que les Gouvernements étrangers se trouvent constamment forcés de s'adresser aux autorités locales des Principautés Vassales pour assurer la marche régulière des affaires commerciales de leurs nationaux.

Les Traités conclus avec la Turquie reconnaissent aux Principautés une administration douanière séparée, mais l'absence d'engagements contractuels entre ces administrations et celles des autres Etats jette souvent une perturbation regrettable dans les relations douanières respectives. Ces inconvénients augmentent au fur et à mesure du développement progressif des voies de communication qui servent à multiplier les échanges avec les Puissances voisines, et à donner une impulsion nouvelle au transit des produits des autres pays.

Nous ne saurions laisser périclliter des intérêts positifs pour des questions de pure forme.

Vous êtes chargé en conséquence de prévenir le Grand Vézir, ainsi que le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, que nous nous croyons en droit de conclure avec les Principautés Vassales de la Turquie des arrangements directs et spéciaux de douane, de tarif, et de commerce. Vous donnerez en même temps au Gouvernement Ottoman l'assurance

formelle que ces arrangements, dénués de tout caractère politique, ne seraient signés que par les Ministères et Administrations compétents, et non revêtus de la sanction Souveraine. De cette façon ils ne sauraient nullement affaiblir aucun des droits de Sa Majesté le Sultan, ni modifier la position garantie par les Traités aux Principautés Vassales vis-à-vis de la Sublime Porte.

No. 85.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 5.)

(No. 258.) *Therapia, October 24, 1874.*

My Lord,

I RECEIVED your Lordship's despatch No. 183 upon my return this afternoon from the Porte, where I had had a long conversation with the Grand Vizir and Aarify Pasha on the question of the Roumanian Treaties.

It was a satisfaction to me to find that my language had been entirely in conformity with the views expressed by your Lordship.

The two Ministers said that they could not but look upon the step taken by the three Powers as an infraction of the Treaty of Paris and as a blow struck at the Porte.

Their motives were apparent, but different.

Austria was acting solely with a view to the commercial interests of her subjects; Germany, in the supposed interest of a Prussian Prince; while Russia was only too glad to assist in tearing up the Treaty of 1856.

The pretensions and asperations of Prince Charles were known, and the Grand Vizir asked whether the Porte could be expected to see, without protesting, a step taken which was so clearly intended to be one towards the absolute repudiation of the authority of the Sultan.

I said that I regretted the course which was being followed, but what we had now to do was to endeavour to render it as little injurious as possible, and I thought the form adopted in the communication of the Ambassadors rendered it easy to return an answer which might satisfy them without too great a sacrifice of the rights of the Porte.

Upon their asking in what terms I thought the answer should be, I replied that they might intimate that the Porte would make no objection to the conclusion of such arrangements as come within the privileges granted to Prince Charles at his investiture, or were not in contradiction with the formal provisions of the Treaties.

It appeared evident that these arrangements would be concluded, and, if they should prove to be in excess of what could now properly be made, it would be better to sanction them beforehand than to have to submit to them afterwards.

The Grand Vizier having observed that firm language, held by the guaranteeing Powers at Bucharest intimating that Prince Charles could not be allowed to break through the limits assigned to him by the Treaties, would have the desired effect, I reminded him that the three Powers, which had the greatest influence over him, having put their own interpretation on the Treaties, what the others said would have no effect.

Her Majesty's Government would regret to see the Treaties disregarded, and would not conceal that regret if the case should occur; but, if the three Powers, reading those Treaties differently, were to conclude Conventions of Commerce with Prince Charles, Her Majesty's Government could neither take themselves, nor encourage the Porte to take, coercive measures towards the Principalities to prevent their being put into execution.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 86.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 5.)

(No. 259. Confidential.) *Therapia, October 24, 1874.*

My Lord,

COUNT ZICHY the other day, in speaking of the question of the Roumanian Treaties, observed to me in rather a marked manner that the way in which it would be dealt with at the Porte depended entirely upon me.

I paid little attention to it at the time, thinking that he wished to enlist my support, by flattering me by a profession of a belief in my own influence, and I should have thought no more about it if it had not been for a question put to me this afternoon by the Grand Vizier.

His Highness asked if I had heard that he was asserted to be wholly under my influence, and that the decisions of the Porte are stated to be all taken under my advice.

I had not heard anything of the kind, and I cannot but attribute the report to a desire in certain quarters to attribute to me a responsibility for many acts of the Porte which I should be very loath to accept, but at the same time it affords evidence that the Grand Vizier looks at present to Her Majesty's Government as to the only one that can be regarded as the true friend of Turkey.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 86*.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 6.)

(No. 261. Secret.) *Berlin, November 1, 1874.*

My Lord,

PRINCE BISMARCK called on me yesterday, and said he was anxious to remove any apprehension I might be under in regard to the concession he had made to Austria respecting the Roumanian Tariff question, which might be mistaken for a change in his Oriental policy: such, however, was not the case. His Oriental policy had undergone no change. He liked the Sultan personally, and was well disposed to his Government and wished to uphold his sovereign rights as heretofore. In truth, Germany had no particular interest in the East beyond the maintenance of the *status quo* in the general interest of peace. But he did not see how the Sultan's suzerainty could suffer in practice or principle by conceding to vassal Powers the permission to modify their tariffs according to the requirements of their commercial interests, and he was glad to hear from Constantinople that the question was likely to be settled in a rational and satisfactory spirit. Count Münster, he said, had been instructed to explain his views on the subject to your Lordship, which he hoped would meet with the approbation of Her Majesty's Government.

There were, however, some further explanations which he wished to make himself and in strict confidence.

His principal interest in the whole question was the consolidation of the ties of friendship between Germany and Austria. To Austria the power of direct negotiation in commercial matters with her neighbour along the Danube had become indispensable, and he preferred Austria should owe that advantage in part to Germany than to Russia alone. He had himself been instrumental in reconciling Austria and Russia, and they were now good friends, but he did not wish them to become too intimate. The independent alliance of Austria was necessary to Germany, he wished Russia to join hands with them and stand by them, but he could not allow Russia to stand between Germany and Austria. He felt sure of Count Andrassy, and, therefore, did all he could to keep him in office. If the Austrians and Ultramontanes got the Government into their hands again they might listen with complacency to Russian inspirations, and revive the old idea of extending the Dominion of Austria down the Danube, a danger he did not apprehend while the Hungarians were in power, because they well knew that the Wallachians were numerically too strong for them and would absorb the Hungarian element which now governed Austria if Roumania became an Austrian Province. In backing up Andrassy and the Hungarians and keeping the Austrian party out of office, he was resisting Russia and protecting Turkey on the Danube. If on the other hand Andrassy fell, and the Austro-Clerical party returned to office and Russian influence prevailed at Vienna, he foresaw trouble and confusion without end.

Prince Bismarck went on to speak of Prince Charles of Roumania, for whom he professed a great personal liking, although he confessed to having been disappointed in his abilities, which he had overestimated. He thought the Prince would have shown more energy and a keener appreciation of his good luck, which from a Prussian lieutenant had made him Prince of Roumania, but he was indolent, and appeared more occupied as a Hohenzollern with his ancestors than with his contemporaries, and

expected others to do for him what he ought to have done for himself. Instead of seeking to make friends in Roumania, he had sought to make an army, which, in case of war, would be as useless to himself as to his allies, if he found any. He (Prince Bismarck) had advised Prince Charles to leave military ambition alone, but to enlist retired Austrian non-commissioned officers and form a reliable and efficient police force, capable of defending him against his own subjects in the event of a revolution. In no case ought he to reckon on future German support, but make up his mind, if he could not hold his own and shift for himself, to return to his barrack duties at Düsseldorf as a Prussian officer in the German army.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 87.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 6.)

(No. 266.)
Berlin, November 3, 1874.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my telegram of this day's date, I have the honour to state that I asked Herr von Bülow what news he had from Constantinople in regard to the identic communication of the German, Austrian, and Russian Governments respecting the right of the Principalities to conclude Commercial Conventions.

His Excellency said that the answer of the Porte had not yet reached Berlin, but he heard from Vienna that the Turkish Ambassador had presented a note to Count Andrassy yesterday, saying that his Government would not appeal to the Treaty Powers for advice in the matter, but would be satisfied with a direct application of the Roumanian Government to the Porte. The tone and spirit of the note was thought to be satisfactory on the whole.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 88.

Aarifi Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, November 7.)

Constantinople, le 28 Octobre, 1874.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

POUR faire suite à mon télégramme du 22 Octobre, j'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre, ci-jointe en copie, l'instruction identique dont il y est fait mention, ainsi que la dépêche que j'ai cru devoir adresser à vos collègues de Vienne, de Berlin et de St. Pétersbourg, en présence de la démarche collective des trois Cabinets du Nord.

Dans cette dépêche je me suis attaché particulièrement, comme votre Excellence le verra, à maintenir le point de vue auquel la Sublime Porte s'est placée dès le début pour envisager la prétention des Principautés Danubiennes de conclure des Conventions Commerciales avec les Puissances. Nous persistons plus que jamais à croire que cette prétention, aussi présomptueuse dans la forme que peu soutenable dans le fond, est la négation même des droits de la Cour Suzeraine, tels qu'ils sont consacrés par le temps et confirmés par les actes solennels qui déterminent définitivement les conditions de l'existence politique de la Moldo-Valachie et de la Serbie. Les Puissances qui nous conseillent de céder sur un point si essentiel semblent ne pas tenir compte des considérations d'ordre majeur qui nous mettent dans l'impossibilité de déchirer de nos propres mains la dernière feuille du Traité de Paris. Nous ne voyons, d'ailleurs, ni la nécessité ni l'utilité d'un pareil sacrifice: ma réponse à la démarche en question suffit pour ôter jusqu'à l'apparence d'un motif plausible à l'entreprise des trois Cabinets du Nord, en leur offrant la perspective d'une transaction légale de nature à assurer le résultat qu'ils entendent poursuivre dans l'intérêt de leurs nationaux.

Je vous prie de faire valoir ces arguments auprès de Lord Derby. Je me plais à espérer qu'appréciant toute la gravité de la question qu'on vient de soulever, sa Seigneurie voudra bien reconnaître, dans ses sentiments éclairés, le besoin de plus en plus accentué d'une identité de vues et d'action entre les Puissances qui, au milieu de la perturbation générale causée par les efforts subversifs qui se produisent de toutes parts, cherchent encore leur point d'appui dans les Traités. En ce qui nous concerne,

nous attachons une importance toute particulière à cette entente, qui offre à nos yeux un gage de force et de modération; aussi serions-nous reconnaissants au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique, s'il voulait bien s'associer à nous et aux Cabinets qui n'ont pas pris part à la démarche dont il s'agit pour obtenir une solution compatible avec l'état de choses qui repose sur la garantie collective des Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) A. AARIFI.

Inclosure 1 in No. 88.

Instructions addressed by the German Ambassador at Constantinople to his First Dragoman, October 20, 1874.

[See Inclosure in No. 84.]

Inclosure 2 in No. 88.

Aarifi Pasha to the Turkish Representatives at St. Petersburgh, Vienna, and Berlin.

Constantinople, le 23 Octobre, 1874.

UNE démarche collective vient d'être faite au nom des trois Cabinets du Nord: les premiers drogmans des Ambassades d'Allemagne, d'Autriche-Hongrie, et de Russie m'ont communiqué une instruction identique de leurs chefs, concernant la faculté qu'auraient les Principautés Danubiennes de conclure des Conventions Commerciales avec les Puissances étrangères. J'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre, ci-joint, une copie de cette instruction.

Il en résulte, comme votre Excellence le verra, que les Cabinets de Berlin, de Vienne, et de St. Pétersbourg, se basant sur leurs intérêts matériels et sur la position des Principautés, déclarent avoir le droit de conclure avec elles des arrangements directs et spéciaux de douane, de tarif et de commerce. Ces Cabinets veulent bien cependant nous donner l'assurance que les transactions à intervenir n'auront aucun caractère politique.

Le prix que le Gouvernement Impérial attache à toute communication venant de la part des trois Puissances, amies et alliées de la Sublime Porte, lui fait un devoir de complaire à leurs vœux dans les limites du possible. Nous nous sommes constamment inspirés de ce principe, si bien que lorsque le Cabinet de Vienne a pris l'initiative d'une proposition tendant à obtenir en faveur des Principautés l'autorisation de conclure des arrangements commerciaux avec l'étranger, notre première pensée a été de chercher une combinaison de nature à concilier la sauvegarde des droits de la Sublime Porte avec les exigences de la situation.

Le Gouvernement Impérial apprécie pleinement les intérêts plus ou moins immédiats, plus ou moins considérables, engagés dans cette question; il ne méconnaît ni ses intérêts ni la nécessité qui en découle au point de vue d'une détermination pratique. Il ne manquerait pas de se rallier à la démarche en question, si elle ne dépassait pas le but spécial qu'elle a apparemment pour objet d'atteindre.

Certes, en faisant cette démarche, les trois Puissances déclarent ne vouloir porter aucune atteinte aux liens qui unissent les Principautés à la Cour Suzeraine, ce dont nous prenons acte avec satisfaction; mais nous sommes amenés en même temps à nous demander si le nouveau coup qui va être donné au Traité de Paris n'aura pas le même effet que ceux qui l'ont précédé, et s'il n'arrivera pas un jour où la volonté des hommes sera impuissante à arrêter le courant qu'on aura créé par une série d'infractions.

Cette réflexion ne nous est point suggérée par une méprise sur la position des Principautés. Nous connaissons l'étendue des priviléges dont elles jouissent sous le rapport administratif et commercial; nous admettons aussi que les Puissances dont les sujets se trouvent en contact avec la Moldo-Valachie et la Serbie veuillent tenir compte des considérations découlant des conditions particulières de ces Principautés; mais il nous serait difficile d'en arriver à une conclusion qui placerait la question sur tout autre terrain que celui des Traités.

Puisqu'il y a lieu de faire abstraction du point de droit, et d'éviter ainsi une

discussion qui nous aurait infailliblement amenés à la nécessité de faire appel à l'opinion individuelle de chacune des Parties Contractantes du Traité de Paris, nous ne voyons plus guère qu'un côté de la question : celui du recours préalable des Gouvernements Princiers à la Cour Suzeraine. Il est évident que notre proposition laisse la voie ouverte à toute transaction légale ayant en vue d'assurer le résultat que les trois Cabinets du Nord entendent poursuivre dans l'intérêt de leurs nationaux. Les inconvénients résultant de l'absence d'engagements contractuels et accentués par le développement progressif des voies de communication sont de ceux qui, dans l'opinion de la Sublime Porte, peuvent parfaitement être écartés sans qu'il soit besoin de rechercher un terrain d'action en dehors des Traités.

Ce n'est point, comme on semble le supposer, une question de pure forme qui détermine notre attitude en cette circonstance. Le Prince Chancelier peut être assuré que des considérations d'ordre majeur nous font un devoir de ne pas nous départir de la ligne de conduite que nous nous sommes tracée dès le début. Nous aimons à espérer que Son Altesse voudra bien accueillir ces observations avec la même loyauté que celle que nous mettons à exprimer notre pensée.

Je vous prie de donner lecture de la présente dépêche au Prince Chancelier et d'en laisser copie à Son Altesse si elle le désire.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) A. AARIFI.

No. 89.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 9.)

(No. 51. Confidential)

Bucharest, October 22, 1874.

My Lord,

THE political views and hopes entertained in these Principalities, and the way they affect their relations and feeling towards the several guaranteeing Powers, seem to me questions of such interest and importance to England as concerning her influence in this part of the East, as to warrant me in writing to your Lordship fully and frankly upon the subject, and I take advantage of the safe opportunity of Colonel Morris' return to Vienna to forward this despatch by him.

In my previous reports I have endeavoured to convey my earlier impressions of the real progress in material prosperity and development made by these Principalities since the Treaties of 1856 and 1858, especially within the last few years, and of their consciousness of this fact; I have also noticed the feelings of greater strength and of self-reliance thus engendered which finds expression among moderate men in a conviction of the real necessity for more extended rights of self-government, including complete commercial enfranchisement; and with the Prince and some of the more advanced politicians, in a dream of eventual independence and a neutrality guaranteed by the great Powers.

Longer experience has served to confirm my impressions and to convince me of the intimate connection between those views and the policy of the various great Powers, which may, I think, fairly be described as follows:—

Russia, Germany, and Austria seem to be acting together, apparently by a prearranged common accord, in support of the commercial privileges demanded by Roumania, but each is probably actuated by different motives.

Austria and Russia are bidding for popularity here; the former recognizing that her position as a neighbour, between whom and these two Principalities ties of commercial intercourse are yearly growing and developing so fast, renders intimate relations and direct arrangements between them a real necessity; Russia, partly perhaps for the same reasons, but chiefly from a desire to regain her former hold and influence over these Christian populations as their principal protector, and to strengthen her propaganda against the Treaty of 1856 as being so worn out and unsuited to the changes that have since occurred, that the Principalities would be in a better position if they looked to her as of old as their only champion.

Germany naturally exercises great influence here, although for the sake of the Prince she uses it quietly and without any parade, but she certainly shows a sympathy and kindly feeling for the development and growth of the Principalities and for the Prince which is grateful and encouraging to him and his Government; Italy, having no decided views nor great interests at stake, seems more disposed to maintain an attitude of reserve and to follow the policy of the majority of the great Powers

whatever it may be, than to take any initiative; while to France and England alone, but especially to the influence of England, the Roumanians attribute the determined resistance of the Porte to their desires and all the difficulties and obstacles which they meet with in attempting to realize them. England, therefore, of all the great Powers, is undoubtedly the least popular here, for although France is blamed for her cold and unsympathetic attitude, she is still credited with a natural sympathy (although suppressed by our influence) for a young nation to whose creation she contributed so much.

It was hoped here that the change of Government in England, and my appointment might result in a favourable change of feeling and policy, but this idea seems now dispelled by the reports received from Constantinople of the reserve observed by England, and the Roumanians attribute our attitude to ignorance of, or indifference to their progress and development, and to our traditional eastern policy to which they fear the Christian populations attached to Turkey will always be sacrificed, even when their real and material interests are at stake.

If this be so, and no concession is to be hoped for from England, they say that they must fain turn for the sympathy and support which is so necessary to them to other Powers, even though their objects be more open to suspicion.

They dwell upon the influence which England and France might exercise here without the possibility of any suspicion of their objects if they would only adopt a less unbending policy, and show greater consideration for the progress of the Principalities. They cannot understand how England, who has attained such a pitch of commercial prosperity and greatness, can wish to stifle the healthy development of a young nation whom she so much helped to bring into the world.

"Cannot England see that we have naturally grown out of the clothes that were made for us in 1858; that they require letting out, and that it is impossible for us always to be tied in the swaddling clothes which were made for us in our infancy?"

I need not trouble your Lordship with a recapitulation of the Roumanian arguments in favour of their rights to complete self-government which I have fully detailed in previous despatches. It is sufficient to say that they cite the arrangements of 1856 and 1858 as entirely favourable to their pretensions; that they deny their being bound by the Commercial Treaties between the Guaranteeing Powers and Turkey because they were never consulted about them; and although they cannot so easily dispose of the undertaking given to the Sultan by their Prince as a condition of his recognition in 1866, they say it was never constitutionally sanctioned, and that in any case the time has arrived for him to be released from it.

But when they take their ground on facts instead of rights, it is difficult, with any accurate knowledge of the subject, to dislodge them from it, for it is impossible to deny their assertions that the two Principalities have made great progress of late (although it is but little in comparison to what remains to be done); that they have shown themselves competent to manage their own affairs; that there is sufficient appearance of stability here to warrant the supposition that the progress and development of the country will continue; and that, whatever may be the theoretical claim of Turkey to sovereignty here, practically it is a mere fiction.

The most reasonable Roumanians ask, in fact, whether restrictions, which no doubt were well suited to their country when it was in its infancy, can be safely maintained after they begin to cramp its growth and development, and whether it is not unwise to attempt to enforce them too long?

I submit these arguments as sufficiently strong to merit the consideration of Her Majesty's Government in determining the line of policy they will pursue towards the Principalities, for I cannot but think that, with the moral support of the majority of the great Powers, they will prevail in the end over all opposition, and that the Roumanians will eventually succeed, either with or without the consent of the Porte, in concluding Commercial Conventions with foreign Powers.

It is, therefore, for Her Majesty's Government to consider whether it will be wise for England to stand aloof while this is being done, throwing entirely into the hands of the three great Continental Powers the influence and popularity which a little timely help and support from her would certainly secure, and which might, at some future time, be very important to her; or whether it would not be better, by supporting the demands of the Principalities to the extent of their real and legitimate requirements, and the relaxation of such restrictions as are obsolete, to get them confined within moderate limits, and any extension of their commercial privileges so shaped, that security can be taken for some time to come at least, for the maintenance in all their important political points of the arrangements of 1856 and 1858.

I need hardly add, that although I have thought it my duty to convey these my honest views to your Lordship, I keep them to myself, and that I will implicitly obey any instructions that your Lordship may be pleased to send me on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 90.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 9.)

(No. 11. Commercial.)

Bucharest, October 24, 1874.

My Lord,

I BEG to thank your Lordship for the approvals of my conduct conveyed in your despatches Nos. 4, 5, and 6, Commercial, of the 16th instant.

With reference to the recent revision of the Roumanian Tariff by a Mixed Commission, I have to inform your Lordship that the foreign Delegates named for this purpose by the Consular Corps thought proper to sign a *procès-verbal* in which it is stated that "les droits fixés dans le Tarif de l'année passée seront maintenus jusqu'au moment où de nouvelles dispositions gouvernementales viendraient à être prises."

Fearing that that the Roumanian Government might seize upon this admission as a pretence for saying that we had thereby indirectly sanctioned the application of their new Customs' Regulations, I called the attention of my colleagues to the mistake made by our Delegates, and the result of a meeting upon the subject was the despatch by our Doyen of the collective note, of which copy is inclosed, pointing out that it was beyond the competency of our Delegates to fix any term for the application of the Tariff, and insisting upon the reserve maintained in our collective note of the 27th ultimo, on behalf of our respective Governments, with respect to any modification of the actual state of affairs.

The Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs has since assured me that the Government quite admit the correctness of our views, and never thought of profiting by the mistake of the Delegates whose powers were limited to the revision of the Tariff.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

Inclosure in No. 90.

M. Fava to M. Boerescu.

Bucarest, Octobre 20, 1874.

M. le Ministre,

LES Délégués désignés par le Corps Diplomatique et Consulaire pour participer aux travaux de la Commission de revision du tarif d'exportation ont signé le $\frac{18}{30}$ Septembre au Ministère des Finances le procès-verbal dont copie est ci annexée.

Cette pièce porte entre autres que les droits fixés dans le Tarif de l'année passée seront maintenus jusqu'au moment où de nouvelles dispositions gouvernementales viendraient à être prises.

La fixation du terme de l'application des tarifs ne pouvant être du ressort des Délégués, nous croyons, mes collègues et moi, devoir insister, M. le Ministre, sur l'observation contenue dans la note que M. l'Agent Diplomatique de Russie vous a adressé en qualité de Doyen le $\frac{15}{27}$ Septembre dernier, à l'effet de réserver la libre appréciation de nos Gouvernements respectifs au sujet de toute disposition ayant pour but de modifier l'état de choses actuel.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) FAVA.

No. 91.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 9.)

(No. 54. Political.)

Bucharest, October 26, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,

respecting two unpleasant difficulties which have recently arisen between the Roumanian Government and the Turkish authorities at Toultcha and Roustchouk.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 91.

Mr Vivian to Sir H. Elliot.

Bucharest, October 26, 1874.

Sir,

I BEG to inclose, for your Excellency's information, the translation of an article taken from the semi-official Government newspaper the "Pressa," giving the Roumanian version of two disagreeable incidents which have occured at Toultcha and Roustchouk, from which it appears that the Turkish authorities have ignored the decisions of the Roumanian Tribunals in two cases in which Turkish subjects lost their lives within Roumanian territory, and have seized an opportunity, after a considerable lapse of time, to retry the cases in their own Tribunals, and to exact the repartition which they consider commensurate with the offence, the punishment in one case falling, as it appears, upon an innocent man.

The Roumanians say that these frontier fights, which sometimes end in bloodshed, are provoked by the Turks coming across the Danube at night either to cut wood on the Roumanian Islands or to smuggle, and they maintain the right of their frontier guards to use force if necessary in opposing such proceedings, while they repudiate entirely the pretensions of the Turks to jurisdiction in cases occurring on Roumanian soil, or to exact redress for the decision of a Roumanian Tribunal because it may not have been satisfactory to them.

I should be glad to know your Excellency's opinion upon this point, more especially as a rumour has reached me that if the Roumanian Government cannot obtain satisfaction in these two cases, they intend to indemnify the families of the two Roumanians imprisoned by the Turks, and to deduct the amount of the indemnity from the tribute.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 91.

Extract from the "Pressa."

LA JUSTICE EN TURQUIE.—UN double conflit a eu lieu récemment entre les autorités Roumaines et les autorités Ottomanes, l'un à Toultcha, l'autre à Roustchouck. La "Presse," de Bucarest, dont les informations ont une autorité toute particulière, raconte comme il suit ces nouveaux incidents.

Un Roumain, nommé Anghelutza, faisait en 1872 à Galatz l'office de sergent.

Une querelle étant servenue entre divers individus, le sergent voulut intervenir, comme c'était son devoir. Il fut frappé par un Turc qui se trouvait là. Le sergent se défendit et, en se défendant, il frappa le Turc à son tour. Les coups portés firent au Turc de graves blessures dont il mourut quelques jours après. Le sergent fut mis sous jugement; mais on reconnut qu'il avait été dans le cas de légitime défense; d'ailleurs il était mineur, quand le fait arriva. Le tribunal le condamna cependant à quelques mois de prison. Sa condamnation fut purgée dès cette même année 1872.

On pensait que tout était fini, et tout l'eût été, en effet, dans un pays civilisé et où les lois sont respectées. Mais il devait en arriver autrement. Cette année-ci, 1874, c'est-à-dire deux ans après qu'Anghelutza avait subi sa peine, il eut affaire en Turquie et se rendit à Mâtchin. Les autorités locales, prévenues, mirent la main sur lui et l'envoyèrent en prison à Toultcha. Or il s'agissait d'un délit commis en Roumanie, en 1872, et déjà jugé par les Tribunaux Roumains. La famille d'Anghelutza porta ses plaintes au Gouvernement et celui-ci s'empressa d'intervenir, avec toute l'energie et la dignité que lui dictaient les Traités et tous les principes de droit international. La correspondance continue; l'affaire est encore pendante . . . . c'est tout ce que nous savons pour le moment.

Nous espérons cependant que le Gouvernement Ottoman, mieux éclairé, reviendra sur sa première inspiration. Il n'insistera pas à déclarer la compétence du Tribunal de Toultcha et il finira par se mettre d'accord avec les Traités et tous les principes et les usages du droit international. S'il ne le faisait pas, sa conduite serait des plus violentes

et des plus usurpatrices. Tout crime ou délit commis, n'importe par qui, sur le Territoire Roumain, doit être jugé et puni seulement en Roumanie. C'est là un principe que personne ne discute plus chez les nations civilisées.

Tout aussi incontestable est cet autre principe qu'un individu mis sous jugement et ayant subi la peine méritée par son infraction, ne peut plus être jugé et puni une seconde fois.

Le Gouvernement Ottoman prétendrait-il violer ces principes?

Si, à cette occasion, ils invoquaient l'intégrité de l'Empire Ottoman, les hommes d'Etat de la Turquie non seulement transformeraient la Roumanie en Pachalik, non seulement violeraient de la manière la plus flagrante nos anciennes Capitulations et les nouveaux Traités Politiques, mais encore ils insulteraient à la morale sociale et au droit public Européen, en punissant deux fois pour le même délit un individu que tout autorisait à se croire à l'abri de nouvelles poursuites.

Et si le Gouvernement Roumain, dans cette circonstance, soutenait avec force les droits du pays, est-ce qu'on pourrait l'accuser de chercher à troubler la paix en Orient?

Ceux-là troublent la paix, qui violent les droits d'autrui par d'imprudentes provocations.

Lorsque la Turquie nous attaque sur le terrain politique, quand elle cherche à nous annihiler en contestant les Traités qui établissent notre souveraineté, en contestant nos droits, notre nom et jusqu'à notre existence . . . . . c'est nous qui serions les perturbateurs parceque nous défendons notre nationalité! . . . . . Et lorsque, sur le terrain social intérieur, le Gouvernement Ottoman nous conteste jusqu'à la séparation judiciaire et veut nous traiter en pays conquis . . . . . c'est nous qui sommes les perturbateurs parceque nous défendons notre autonomie! . . . . Que tout le monde sache bien que nous ferons notre devoir et que nous serons toujours forts et sûrs de vaincre en restant sur le terrain de la légalité.

Le second incident est relatif au Sieur Deliu, dit encore Jean Gheorgiu, autre sujet Roumain. M. Deliu est un habitant de Ialomitza. Il figura, comme simple témoin, dans un procès relatif à un meurtre commis en 1866 sur deux sujets Ottomans, dans l'île Roumaine de Soimul. Deux inculpés, qui avaient été arrêté comme les auteurs du crime, furent reconnus innocents et acquittés. Quant au Sieur Deliu, il n'avait pas même été inculpé.

Sept ans plus tard, c'est-à-dire en 1873, il passe en Turquie. Les autorités de Silistrie s'emparent de lui et le jettent en prison. Le Gouvernement Roumain intervient et proteste, se basant toujours sur la souveraineté territoriale locale. Malgré cela, le détenu est envoyé à Roustchouk pour y être jugé

Ici la question prend des proportions plus tristes. On envoie au Gouvernement Roumain une espèce de rapport du Tribunal Criminel de Roustchouk, où se trouve énoncée une menace résultant de la plus étrange des doctrines: à savoir que, si l'on ne découvre pas les véritables assassins, si l'on ne donne pas une indemnité aux familles des Turcs assassinés, le Tribunal Ottoman considèrera Deliu comme l'assassin et le punira en conséquence.

En d'autres termes, l'autorité judiciaire de Roustchouk invoque ce droit barbare et inhumain, le droit d'otages. Le Tribunal de Roustchouk lui-même n'affirme pas que Deliu soit coupable, car on sait bien qu'il n'a figuré dans le procès que comme témoin; mais il dit: "Trouvez le coupable ou je considère celui-ci comme l'assassin et je le condamne."

La menace s'est réalisée. Le malheureux a été condamné à quinze ans de travaux forcés! . . . . .

Ainsi, contre les Traités, contre le droit des gens, contre les principes de la morale et de la civilisation Européenne, un sujet Roumain est jugé et condamné par le Gouvernement Ottoman pour une infraction commise sur le territoire Roumain, et cela non pas même parceque l'individu jugé est reconnu coupable mais parceque l'on n'a pu découvrir le véritable auteur du crime! . . . . .

Viennent maintenant tous les amis de la Turquie, viennent tous les juristes de Londres, soutenir qu'un pareil fait est juste, légal, humain, et que les Roumains sont des perturbateurs, parcequ'ils défendent leur autonomie et qu'ils soutiennent les principes du droit international général.

Ici encore la question est pendante. Le Gouvernement Roumain a énergiquement protesté et il ne cesse point de réclamer le respect de la justice. On n'a pas encore fait valoir les derniers arguments. Espérons que la Sublime Porte finira par reconnaître ses torts et par réparer un mal dont l'evidence ne peut être niée.

Nous avons relaté en détail ce double incident, ajoute la "Presse," pour que l'on

sache bien de quel côté viennent les provocations et pourquoi la Roumanie affirme avec tant d'insistance son autonomie et pourquoi elle veut pouvoir se défendre au besoin.

No. 92.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 9.)

(No. 313.)

My Lord, *Vienna, November 3, 1874.*

I HAVE spoken to Count Andrassy of the cases of disputed jurisdiction between Roumania and Turkey, which are reported in Mr. Vivian's despatch to Sir Henry Elliot of the 25th ultimo, and of which a copy is transmitted to your Lordship by Mr. Vivian in his political despatch No. 54 of the 26th ultimo, and I find that his Excellency considers the Turkish authorities to be in the wrong in both cases. His Excellency said that autonomy with respect to justice was clearly conferred on the Principalities by the Treaty of Paris, and that the Porte cannot therefore have any right to punish a Roumanian subject for acts committed on the territory of the Principalities, and already judged by the local Tribunals.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have been assured by Raschid Pasha that there has been no conflict as to jurisdiction, and that the second trial and condemnation of Roumanians in Turkey has been caused by the Government at Bucharest neglecting to give explanations or information to the Turkish Government as to the trial and punishment of the persons who had murdered the Turks.

A. B.

No. 93.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 9.)

(No. 317. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Vienna, November 3, 1874.*

IN the able despatch which Mr. Vivian addressed to your Lordship on the 22nd ultimo, marked Political, No. 51, in favour of a relaxation of commercial restrictions in the Principalities, your Lordship will probably consider that the most important point is overlooked of there being no disposition on the part of the Porte or of Her Majesty's Government to cramp the developments of Roumanian prosperity, as the Sultan only requires, in order to sanction the right of concluding Commercial Conventions which the Principality is desirous of exercising, that His Imperial Majesty's sanction should be asked for, and Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that without it an attempt to exercise such a right would be a violation of the stipulations of the Treaty of Paris.

I regret to find that Count Andrassy, who is at present in Vienna, continues to entertain a different opinion on this subject from your Lordship, and represents the XXIIIrd Article of the Treaty of 1856, which accords to the Principalities freedom of commerce and navigation, as giving them a right to regulate their own Tariff, while he also maintains that the stipulation in the Firman of Investiture sent to Prince Charles authorizing arrangements with frontier States for material and local interests is clearly applicable to such a Convention as he proposes to conclude with the Government of Bucharest.

In a conversation which I have recently had with his Excellency on the subject, he said that in deference to the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, and with a view to satisfy the susceptibilities of the Porte, he had endeavoured to obtain the sanction of the Turkish Government to the proposed Convention, as by giving that sanction at his request they would support their own views upon the question, and it would be indirectly established that without their sanction the Convention could not be entered into. They had, however, he said, instead of complying with this request, proposed that he should use his influence at Bucharest to induce the Government of Prince Charles to apply for the sanction of the Sultan, and this he had declined to do, because in the first instance, with a view to the dignity of the Emperor's Government, he did not choose to recommend at Bucharest what he knew would be rejected; and, in the second, because his making such a proposal, if it were rejected, would render the

position of the Porte in the question worse than it is at present. Therefore, if the Turkish Government will not avail itself of the means which he has suggested for conciliating its opinions and its dignity with what he considers he is perfectly entitled to do in the interest of Austria-Hungary, he can only regret it, but he cannot consent to sacrifice the interests of his country to susceptibilities arising, in his opinion, from an erroneous interpretation of the stipulations of the Treaty of Paris. I answered that as Her Majesty's Government, who have no material interests in the question, and only desire that it may be arranged without a violation of the stipulations of the Treaty of Paris, are of opinion that the pretensions of the Principalities to conclude Commercial Treaties are inconsistent with that Treaty, and as there is reason to believe that the Government of Bucharest merely look upon the present question as a step to the attainment of entire political independence, I felt assured that they would deeply regret that it is not likely to be settled without a disregard to the legitimate authority of the Sultan in the Principalities, as it is recognized, in their opinion, by the Treaty of Paris.

Since I held this conversation with Count Andrassy, Raschid Pasha has communicated to his Excellency a despatch which he has received from Constantinople, acquainting him with the collective steps taken in the question by the Ambassadors of Austria, Germany, and Russia, and intimating that though the Porte does not recognize the right of the Principalities to conclude Commercial Treaties with foreign Powers, it would not be unwilling to authorize them to do so, if they requested the concession.

His Excellency stated in reply that he would instruct Count Zichy to answer the despatch, but that he would be unable to comply with the suggestion it conveyed, for the reasons which I have reported above to your Lordship; and he appears also to have intimated (which may surprize your Lordship) that the Porte was itself the cause of the identic communication made to it by the three Ambassadors, by inviting the opinion of the German and Russian Governments on the subject, while it had promised to Count Zichy that, if he would give it reasonable time, it would find a means of settling the question in a manner which would be satisfactory to all parties.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 94.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 9.)

(No. 276.) *Berlin, November 6, 1874.*

My Lord,

HERR VON BÜLOW called on me to-day, and told me that the Turkish Ambassador, Aristarchy Bey, had given him the copy of the expected answer from the Porte to the identic communication of Austria, Germany, and Russia, claiming for Roumania the right to conclude Commercial Conventions with foreign Powers, which, in the absence of Prince Bismarck, he had received *ad referendum*.

The note, his Excellency said, was couched in unobjectionable terms, and although the Turkish Government argued against the right, they were ready to concede the privilege of separate commercial negotiation, if directly applied to by the Roumanian Government. On the whole he was not displeased with the note.

I asked whether his Excellency thought the Roumanian Government would consent to apply, and allow the question to be settled without further ado?

Herr von Bülow had not yet heard from Bucharest how the Turkish answer had been taken.

I asked further whether his Excellency thought the Austrian Government would consent to advise that of Roumania to do as bidden by the Suzerain Power?

His Excellency was still expecting news from Vienna. The German Government had but a secondary interest in the question, and wished to act cordially with the Austrian Government throughout.

In the further course of conversation, I took the opportunity of saying that I had reason to know that Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that the Principalities did not possess authority to conclude Commercial Treaties with foreign Powers, and concurred with the Porte that such Treaties, if entered into, would be in violation of existing Treaty engagements.

At the same time, Her Majesty's Government had not hesitated to advise the Porte to make such timely concessions as might serve to remove any substantial

grievances on the part of the Principalities, so far as that could be done without injury to the political integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 95.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 223.) *Foreign Office, November 10, 1874.*

My Lord,

THE German Ambassador called upon me to-day, and, by desire of Prince Bismarck, as he said, gave an explanation of the course adopted by his Government on the question of Roumanian Commercial Treaties.

His language was almost identical with that reported by your Excellency in your despatch No. 261 Secret of the 1st instant, as having been addressed to you by Prince Bismarck.

His Excellency assured me that Germany had given, and would give, no encouragement to any designs which the Roumanian Government might have formed of bringing about the separation of the Principalities from the Turkish Empire; nor was it the wish of his Government to take any step that could injuriously affect the position secured by Treaties to Turkey. The question now under discussion did not practically affect any German interest; the inducement to his Government to take it up had been, partly, the wish to support that of Austria in a matter to which the latter attached great importance, partly also the desire of preventing future complications which were likely to arise unless an arrangement of some sort could be come to. He believed that the inclination of the Porte was to deal with the question in a conciliatory spirit, and, if so, a settlement ought not to be difficult to arrive at. Prince Bismarck, he said, attached great importance to the co-operation of England, and especially desired that Her Majesty's Government should clearly understand what his principle of action had been.

I said, in reply, that I had heard his Excellency's language with much pleasure, and trusted that it might even now not be impossible to attain a satisfactory solution. He must be aware that England had never admitted in principle the demand now made by the Governments of the Principalities, which, to me, appeared clearly contrary to Treaty Stipulations. I could not, therefore, do otherwise than regret that an attempt had not been made to induce the Porte voluntarily to concede the privilege in question, as a matter of favour, and not of right, which would equally have effected the object in view without any violation of Treaty, and without creating a dangerous precedent for the future. I agreed with his Excellency as to the good sense and moderation of the language held by the Porte, and he might rely on the influence of Her Majesty's Government being employed to prevent any extreme course being adopted and to smooth down, as far as might be possible, whatever unpleasantness might now exist.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 96.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, November 9, 1874, 6·30 P.M.*

DO you know whether the question has been considered as to the effect the negotiation of Commercial Treaties by the Principalities would have on the commercial relations of the Principalities with Turkey? Would not an independent Roumanian Tariff necessitate a Customs' line between the Principalities and Turkey?

No. 97.

Lord Lytton to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 11.)

(No. 1,060. Confidential.) *Paris, November 9, 1874.*

My Lord,

YESTERDAY I waited on the Duc Decazes at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and, after some conversation on commercial matters, in reference to which I have already had occasion to report to your Lordship (in my accompanying Commercial despatch No. 353) the singularly friendly and helpful spirit in which his Excellency has

entered into the wishes of Her Majesty's Government, and the steps personally taken by him to give effect to those wishes, the Duke referred to the present state of the Roumanian question.

In order that I might the better understand the point of view from which he is disposed to regard it, his Excellency was so good as to read to me first the following documents:—

1. The identic note addressed by the Austrian, Russian, and German Ambassadors to the Porte, on the 21st of October last.

2. The reply of the Porte to this communication from the three Northern Powers, which is dated the 23rd ultimo.

3. A despatch from the Grand Vizier to the Turkish Ambassador at Paris, dated the 28th ultimo, which has just been communicated to the Duke by Ali Pasha, in accordance with the orders of his Government, who, I may add, have evinced great anxiety, not to say impatience, for an early reply to this communication on the subject of their above-mentioned correspondence with the Cabinets of Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburgh.

I presume that your Lordship is already in possession of copies of the identic note, and the Porte's reply thereto; and that you have also received from Musurus Pasha some communication either similar to, or identical with, the communication made by Ali Pasha to the Duc Decazes.

If so, your Lordship will, doubtless, have been struck by the marked difference of the language which the Porte employs in its reply to the identic note, and the terms in which it alludes to that note when addressing the Powers who have abstained from signing it.

I refer to these documents from memory; but, to the best of my recollection, the Porte, in its reply to the three Northern Powers, distinctly recognizes that the question of right has not been raised in the note which announces their intention of contracting Commercial Treaties with the Roumanian Government. The Grand Vizier even thanks the three Powers for having thus obviated the necessity of a direct appeal from the Porte to the individual opinion of the Powers signatory to the Treaty of Paris; and he proceeds to discuss the question in a very conciliatory spirit, as one of practical convenience to the frontier States; implying that, although the proposed mode of attaining their object is inadmissible, yet that object is, in itself, a reasonable one, which may be legally effected by means of a direct appeal from the Vassal Government to the Suzerain Power.

In his communication to the Duc Decazes, however, the Vizier treats the whole question raised by the three Northern Powers as a question of right, invokes the individual opinion of the French Government, and characterizes the identic note as an outrage upon the sanctity of international settlements, and an attempt to tear up the last leaf of the Treaty of Paris.

In endeavouring to form a clear opinion as to the best course to be pursued under these circumstances, the Duke had carefully consulted the Convention of 1858, which regulates the political position of the Principalities towards the Porte, and the Firman of 1866. The Convention accords to the Principalities, both *implicite* and *explicite*, complete administrative independence in regard to the making and altering their own tariff; and the Firman, in the 2nd paragraph of its IVth Article, exempts from all the restraints therein enumerated every arrangement respecting local interests between the Governments of the frontier States, provided such arrangements do not assume the form of Treaties properly so called, and are kept free of all political character.

In reference to this stipulation I would venture to observe, firstly, that, although Germany has clearly no claim to be regarded as a frontier State when speaking of Roumania, yet, in the language of the identic note, the three Powers which have signed it are particularly referred to as frontier States, and that the note attempts to justify the intention they announce exclusively on the ground of their exceptional commercial interests and geographical circumstances as frontier States. Secondly, that the Governments of the genuine frontier States have hitherto, under the terms of the Firman, contracted postal and other similar Conventions with the Roumanian Government, these instruments being regarded as divested of political character or Treaty form by the fact of their not being signed by the head of the State; and that the identic note proposes to give the same form to commercial Conventions with the Roumanian Government.

It would appear, therefore, that the effect of the intention announced in the identic note, so far, at least, as regards the three Powers who signed it, will, if that intention be carried out, be, 1st, the unauthorized inclusion of Commercial Treaties not bearing

the Imperial signature amongst the arrangements which the Roumanian Government is authorized by the Firman of 1866 to make with frontier States; and 2nd, the practical extension to Germany (a non-frontier State) of the exceptional privileges accorded by the same Firman to the real frontier States.

The effect of the note upon the position of the Powers who have abstained from signing it is, however, another matter.

The new Roumanian Tariff will come into force on the 1st of January, and the Powers who have refused to sign the identic note will doubtless be told by the Roumanian Government that they must either submit to this new Tariff or negotiate with it Treaty Tariffs on their own behalf.

Recognizing the imminent embarrassment of such a situation, the Duke proceeded to review the various courses which, as yet, appeared open to the adoption of the Powers not parties to the identic note, viz., France, England, and Italy.

Shall we claim from the Porte to be placed on the footing of the most-favoured nations?

But with what propriety or consistency can we make such a claim in reference to Treaties of which we do not recognize the legality?

Shall we content ourselves with a simple collective protest against the whole proceeding?

But, in the first place, the identic note alone scarcely furnishes an adequate pretext for such a protest; for the identic note, which is very skilfully worded, elaborately repudiates all intention of an attack upon the Suzerain rights of the Porte; and the Porte, in its reply, accepts that repudiation. A protest, therefore, could only be recorded by the other Powers against some actual violation of the Porte's Suzerain rights as guaranteed by Treaty. It could not appropriately be applied to a prospective violation of those rights which is only to be found in an interpretation of the note, repudiated by the Powers who have signed it, and not openly ascribed to it by the Porte herself.

The occasion, therefore, for a collective Protest did not seem to the Duke to have arisen, and yet, when such an occasion does arise from the actual signature of a Commercial Treaty with the Roumanian Government, the Protest will have been deprived beforehand of all efficacity. To make a Protest knowing that it will be ineffectual is imprudent; to maintain such a Protest, to the detriment of one's own interest, is unpractical; to abandon it, for the sake of one's own convenience, is undignified.

The Duc Decazes, therefore, dismissing the notion of an immediate Protest, turned to the consideration of the course urged upon the adoption of the Western Powers by the communication of the 28th ultimo, which had been made to him by Ali Pacha.

This was to the effect that the Western Powers should endeavour to effect a solution of the difficulty by supporting the Porte's invitation of a direct appeal from the vassal State to the suzerain Power.

The Duke observed thereupon that, in the first place, the success of such an endeavour was extremely doubtful; and, in the second place, assuming the success of it, the result would disembarrass the position of the Porte in this affair without any corresponding improvement in the position of those of her allies, whom the Porte's imprudent policy has placed in their present difficulty.

When the Porte denounced her Treaties with those Powers, she was duly warned of the embarrassment which might ensue to herself from that step, but the warning was disregarded.

He had, on that occasion, told Ali Pacha that the best course for the Porte to pursue, after the denunciation of the Treaties, would be spontaneously to ask the Powers to make their own commercial arrangements with the Roumanian Government.

In the Porte's reply to the identic note a suggestion is made which, if adopted, will save the simulacrum of the Sultan's suzerainty; but no assurance is given to the Powers who are asked to support this suggestion that their own commercial interests will thereby be secured.

Moreover, there is a political as well as a commercial aspect, in which the Porte's proposal must be considered. The despatch of the 28th October, communicated to the French Government, endeavours to array the three Western against the three Northern Powers, in a manner which does not appear to the Duke at all conducive to the general interests of the Powers concerned.

In short, the Porte virtually asks us to get her chestnuts out of the fire at the risk

of our own fingers, without even promising us a substantial share of the rescued repast.

In view of all these considerations, the Duke said it had occured to him that perhaps our best course would be to address the Porte somewhat to the following effect:—

"By your denunciation of the Treaties you have placed us, your friends, as well as yourself, in a very embarrassing position, of which the responsibility is rather yours than ours. We have declined to join in the identic note, because that note did not appear to us to offer the proper remedy for the state of things which you have thus brought about, and moreover the point of view which it adopts is an exclusive one. But, sharing as we do, the respect professed by the three northern Powers for the Suzerain rights of the Porte, we think that it is for the Porte herself to suggest or facilitate some general arrangement, not confined to the Roumanian frontier States, whereby the commercial interests of all her allies may be placed upon a satisfactory footing in their relation to the Roumanian Government, with due regard to the paramount Suzerain rights of the Sultan; and, to this effect, the Porte might be invited to propose on her own initiative some interpretation or modification of the Treaty conditions about Roumania, which shall be generally applicable to the interests of all the Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYTTON.

No. 98.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 209.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, November 6, 1874.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 258 of the 24th ultimo, and I approve the judicious advice tendered by you to the Porte with reference to the identic note addressed by Germany, Austria, and Russia to the Turkish Government.

Her Majesty's Government reserve their further opinion until they receive a copy of the answer returned to the three Powers by the Porte.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 99.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lytton.

(No. 649.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, November 11, 1874.*

THE French Ambassador called upon me to-day and stated that his Government would be glad to be informed of the views taken by Her Majesty's Government of the position of the question of Commercial Conventions with the Principalities which had been raised in the correspondence between the Governments of Austria, Germany, Russia, and the Porte. He was instructed to make this inquiry in order that there might be co-operation, if possible, between his Government and that of Her Majesty, and that, in any case, there might be a perfectly frank exchange of ideas.

His Excellency expressed it as the opinion of his Government that it was not on general grounds desirable to give a disproportionate importance to the question, especially as it is not very easy to see what action can be taken upon it. He thought it was neither the wish nor the interest of his Government to revive the Eastern question generally, more particularly under fresh circumstances, when the Western and Eastern Powers appeared to be ranged on opposite sides.

To these observations I gave a general concurrence. Some discussion then followed on matters of detail, which it is not necessary for me to recapitulate.

I expressed a wish, before pronouncing any decided opinion, to learn what the Porte itself was prepared to do or to suggest. The difficulty was one which concerned the Turkish Government in the first instance and which might have been avoided had the advice of France and England been adopted, and it would be well to know the view the Porte took of it. It appeared at least doubtful whether any attempt to induce the three Powers to reconsider their course would be productive of advantage,

as it seemed unlikely that either they or the Government of the Principalities would consent to refer to the Porte a question which they had publicly declared it to be their right and their intention to settle independently.

I promised to communicate to his Excellency frankly and confidentially whatever information I might receive, either from the Turkish Ambassador or the Representatives of the three Powers.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 100.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 219.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, November 12, 1874.*

I HAVE to convey to your Excellency my approval of the language which you held to Count Zichy with reference to the affairs of the Principalities as reported in your despatch No. 256 of the 23rd ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 101.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 220.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, November 12, 1874.*

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me to-day and asked the opinion of Her Majesty's Government on the question of the claim of Austria, Germany, and Russia, to conclude commercial Conventions with the Governments of the United Principalities.

I expressed to his Excellency in reply the satisfaction which Her Majesty's Government felt at the moderation and good sense shown in the note of the Turkish Government.

I stated that Her Majesty's Government agreed with the Porte in considering the view taken by the three Powers of the right of the Principalities to conclude separate Commercial Conventions as untenable and the action proposed to be taken by them therefore as contrary to Treaty engagements. It, however, appeared to me that the three Powers were too much compromised to recede from the position which they had taken up, while it would be useless to ask the Government of the Principalities to apply at Constantinople for permission to contract Commercial Conventions since we knew that they would not consent to do so.

His Excellency agreed with me in this.

I added that merely to protest would be of little practical use. The question, therefore, was what was there that remained to be done. Had his Excellency any suggestion to offer?

His Excellency said that he was not instructed to make any proposal, but that he personally considered that there should be an exchange of opinions between Her Majesty's Government and those of the three Powers with a view to come to some agreement as to the proper construction of the Treaty.

He thought that the question of form might be arranged if as a means of settling the difference and on the application of some one or more of the Powers the Porte should freely grant to the Governments of the Principalities the right now in dispute of making these Conventions.

I assured his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government would give the suggestion which he had offered their best consideration.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 102.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 223.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, November* 13, 1874.

IN the course of a conversation which I had this day with Count Munster, I informed his Excellency of the desire felt by Her Majesty's Government to settle the question of Roumanian Commercial Treaties in a manner which should at once give to the Principalities the substantial advantages which they had in view, and show the respect felt by the Powers for existing engagements as they concerned the rights of the Porte.

I was not prepared, I said, to lay before Count Munster any definite scheme for the purpose of settling the question, but it seemed to me all but certain that the Porte would at once and without hesitation concede the rights in dispute, provided that its authority to grant or to withhold them were recognized. The question was, for the Turkish Government, one of form rather than of substance, and such being the case, it seemed a pity that anything should be done which would have the appearance of throwing discredit on Treaties which both our Governments were anxious to maintain while a simple and unobjectionable solution could be arrived at.

Was it impossible, I inquired, that the Powers should agree to ask the Porte for the requisite permission? It might no doubt be said that some of them had proposed to dispense with it; but, inasmuch as there was among them an avowed difference of opinion as to the propriety of so doing, they might very well join in a procedure which had the advantage of uniting them all and which would lead with no appreciable delay to the result which they desired to bring about.

His Excellency promised to communicate what I had said to his Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 103.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 13.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, November* 13, 1874.

THE effect that Commercial Treaties with the Principalities might have on the relations with Turkey does not seem to have been taken into consideration.

There is a Customs line on the Danube, and I will ascertain the nature of the present arrangements.

No. 104.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 14.)

(No. 99.)
My Lord, *Rome, November* 14, 1874.

IN the course of an interview which I had yesterday afternoon with the Chevalier Visconti Venosta, his Excellency touched upon the subject of the Danubian Principalities. He said that a certain M. Esarco, who styled himself "Agent Diplomatique de la Roumanie," had been for some months resident in Rome, that he sometimes conversed with this gentleman on the affairs of the Principalities, but that he did not recognize in him any official quality, and that he was by no means considered as belonging to the Diplomatic Body. M. Esarco, he believed, had seen the King and had delivered a letter from Prince Charles, but he was not received by His Majesty in an official capacity. His Excellency asked if any such agent as M. Esarco was resident in London. I replied that I believed not.

Turning to the question now under discussion between Austria, Germany, and Russia, on the one part, and the Turkish Government on the other, relative to the right of the Principalities to conclude Commercial Treaties, M. Visconti Venosta informed me that some months ago, before the matter had arrived at its present phase, he had, on the subject being mentioned to him by the Turkish Minister, advised the Porte, while endeavouring to maintain its political rights, not to be too rigid in opposing the claims of the Government of the Principalities to act independently in this matter, as, otherwise, the Turkish Government might be subjected to the annoy-

ance of seeing their authority ignored and set aside. The Turkish Minister seems to have expressed the opinion that if the Porte was firm, the Government of the Principalities would, in the end, give up their pretensions, or at all events ask the permission of the Sultan's Government to conclude these Conventions. M. V. Venosta says that he told the Turkish Minister not to deceive himself on this point; that the Government of Prince Charles would certainly not yield even if advised to do so by the whole of Europe, much less when they were backed up by Austria and the two other Northern Powers.

M. Visconti's advice to the Sultan's Government seems indeed to have been to avoid getting things into the position in which they precisely are now. Italy, M. Visconti informed me, had no direct interest at this moment in the matter in dispute, for she had a Treaty of Commerce with Turkey, one of the stipulations of which made it applicable to the Principalities. The Turkish Government had, however, two or three months ago, he said, denounced the Treaty, and it would expire at the end of 1875.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 105.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 14, *night.)*

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, November* 14, 1874, 9·47 P.M.

FROM a conversation with Aarifi Pacha to-day, I feel tolerably confident that if the proposed commercial arrangements between Austria and the Principalities do not sanction duties in excess of eight per cent. allowed by the Turkish Commercial Treaties no serious objection is likely to be made by the Porte.

I understand from the Austrian Ambassador that in the proposed arrangement with Servia seven and a-half is the maximum, and if, it is stated, there will be the same limitation with Roumania, the difficulties with the Porte may probably be got over.

No. 106.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lytton.

(No. 658. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, November* 14, 1874.

THE French Ambassador informed me to-day, in an entirely confidential manner, that a telegraphic despatch had been received by him from the French Foreign Office, informing his Excellency that, according to reports received from the French Ambassador at Vienna, the Trans-Leithan Ministry considered the demands of the united Principalities, with regard to the regulation of the import of cereals, to be contrary to the interests of Hungary, and seemed disposed to oppose Count Andrassy's projet for negotiations with Roumania. This opposition might even compromise the position of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

On the other hand, the Duc Decazes had heard from Berlin that the German Government were only seeking in the affair to support Count Andrassy, and favour his retention in the Ministry.

At Rome, it seems to be thought that the best solution of the difficulty would be to obtain from the Porte the concession, by special firman to the Principalities, of the privileges which it had already allowed to the Khedive in similar circumstances. The Italian Government had, however, not made any official communication to the French Government on the subject.

The Duc Decazes saw, at all events, that there would be some delay, and suggested that advantage might be taken of it to exercise influence with the Porte, and obtain from it a concession applicable to all the Powers, and which would meet the interests of all, without striking a blow at the agreement established by the Treaties between all the Contracting Powers. Would it be advisable to go so far as formally to authorize the Principalities to negotiate Treaties of a non-political character, or should the Porte confine itself to promising to ratify the Commercial Convention? The concession of the Porte might be of either description.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 107.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 16.)

(No. 405.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, November 10, 1874.*

YOUR Lordship is aware that an official communication was lately made to the Sublime Porte by the Representatives of Austria, Germany, and Russia, through their respective Dragomans, on the subject of the conclusion of commercial arrangements with the Danubian Principalities.

M. de Westmann, in reply to my inquiry, informed me to-day that Kiamil Pasha, the Turkish Ambassador at this Court, had communicated to him a few days ago the answer of the Porte to this communication, which his Excellency characterized as conciliatory in spirit and moderate in tone.

His Excellency stated that the communication made to the Porte by the three Powers bore the character of a declaration (or notification) that in view of the necessities imposed on the limitroph States for the furtherance of their material interests, they had taken the resolution to conclude arrangements with the Danubian Principalities which would be simply of an administrative nature, and would bear no political character.

M. de Westmann explained that these arrangements or Conventions would be drawn up in the name of the Government, and not of the Emperor, as was usual in formal Treaties, and they would be signed by the competent Ministers without being ratified by the Sovereign. They would be mere administrative acts, and, as such, would fall within the autonomic competency accorded by the Treaties of 1856 and 1858 to the Principalities.

His Excellency observed that in adopting this course there would neither be an infraction of Treaty engagements, nor any encroachment on the Suzerain rights of the Porte.

His Excellency stated that he considered the incident as closed, and that, as the Turkish note was in reply to the notifications of the three Powers, there was no necessity for any rejoinder, and that consequently no further reply would be made by the Imperial Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 108.

Memorandum communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, November 16.

POUR justifier la prétention des Principautés de conclure directement des Conventions Commerciales avec les Puissances étrangères, on invoque la faculté que le Firman d'investiture du Prince Charles reconnaît à l'administration Moldo-Valaque de conclure avec les administrations limitrophes des arrangements d'un intérêt local.

En effet, l'Article 4 de ce Firman, auquel ont accédé toutes les Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris, est ainsi conçu :

"A considérer, comme par le passé, obligatoires pour les Principautés Unies tous les Traités et Conventions existant entre la Sublime Porte et les autres Puissances, en tant qu'ils ne porteraient pas atteinte aux droits des Principautés Unies, établis et reconnus par les actes qui les concernent ; à maintenir et respecter également le principe qu'aucun Traité ou Convention ne pourront être conclus directement par les Principautés Unies avec les Puissances étrangères. Toutefois mon Gouvernement Impérial ne manquera pas à l'avenir de consulter les Principautés Unies sur les dispositions de tout Traité ou Convention qui pourront toucher à leurs lois et règlements commerciaux.

"Les arrangements d'un intérêt local entre deux administrations limitrophes, et n'ayant point la forme de Traité officiel ni de caractère politique, continueront à rester en dehors de ces restrictions."

Ainsi qu'il appert de cette citation, le mode de régler les rapports commerciaux des Principautés Unies avec l'étranger se trouve définitivement déterminé, au su et avec l'adhésion de chacune des Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris ; et c'est pour éluder cette décision unanime qu'on a imaginé de donner aux Traités de Commerce à conclure avec les Principautés la dénomination et le caractère d'arrangements d'intérêt

local entre Etats limitrophes. Mais il est évident qu'un acte international qui concerne le commerce extérieur des Principautés, et intéresse, par conséquent, les autres Puissances autant que les Puissances limitrophes, est d'un intérêt général, et que, par cela même, il ne saurait être rangé dans la catégorie des arrangements d'un intérêt local concernant exclusivement les Etats limitrophes.

Il ne serait pas hors de propos de remarquer ici que, comme les Puissances limitrophes, en concluant des Conventions Commerciales avec les Principautés directement et sans le concours et la participation de la Sublime Porte, auraient naturellement intérêt à obtenir des conditions spécialement avantageuses aux Etats voisins ; et comme, d'un autre côté, les autres Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris, qui, fidèles à leurs engagements internationaux, ne voudront pas conclure directement des Conventions Commerciales avec les Principautés, se verraient obligées, se prévalant du traitement de la nation la plus favorisée, que leurs Traités avec la Sublime Porte leur assurent sur toute l'étendue de l'Empire Ottoman, de se contenter du système commercial extérieur qu'il aurait plu aux Puissances limitrophes d'établir par leurs Conventions Commerciales, il s'ensuivrait que la conclusion de Conventions Commerciales entre les Principautés et les Puissances limitrophes sans le concours de la Sublime Porte serait une violation non-seulement attentatoire aux droits de la Cour Suzeraine, mais aussi préjudiciable aux intérêts et même aux droits des autres Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris.

Dans l'instruction identique donnée à leurs premiers drogmans et communiquée à la Sublime Porte, les trois Ambassades déclarent formellement que ces arrangements, c'est-à-dire, les Conventions Commerciales, ne seraient signés que par les Ministres et Administrations compétentes sans être revêtus de la sanction souveraine. On serait porté à supposer que cette déclaration, qui, d'ailleurs, n'atténue en rien le caractère illégal de tout acte commercial direct entre les Principautés et les Puissances étrangères, est un désaveu de la forme adoptée pour l'arrangement dernièrement conclu entre l'Autriche-Hongrie et les Principautés relativement au raccordement des chemins de fer, arrangement qui, quoique d'un intérêt vraiment local et moins important qu'une Convention Commerciale, est cependant revêtu de toutes les formes d'un véritable Traité : nomination de Plénipotentiaires, communication des pleins pouvoirs respectifs, réserve et échange des ratifications. Mais, si les Principautés, de même qu'elles refusent aujourd'hui leur recours préalable à la Cour Suzeraine, insistaient sur le maintien des formes adoptées pour l'arrangement relatif au raccordement des chemins de fer, et refusaient d'admettre les conditions de la déclaration susmentionnée des trois Ambassades, qui assure qu'on tiendrait plus compte de cette déclaration que des stipulations de Paris, et qu'on ne passerait pas outre, en disant : "Nous ne saurions laisser péricliter des intérêts positifs pour des questions de pure forme ?"

No. 109.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 222.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, November 20, 1874.*

HER Majesty's Government have had under their consideration the communications exchanged between the Governments of Austria, Russia, and Germany, and the Porte, and of which copies were received from the Turkish Ambassador on the 7th instant, respecting the conclusion of Commercial Conventions between the Vassal Principalities and foreign Powers.

It appears to Her Majesty's Government that the question may be regarded from two aspects, political and commercial.

Too great importance should not, in their opinion, be attached to the political aspect, which loses much of its significance from the positive declaration of the three Governments that they have no intention of weakening the ties by which the Principalities are united with the Ottoman Empire. The instruction to the German Dragoman, which is identic with those given to the Dragomans of the Austrian and Russian Embassies, states :—

"Nous ne voulons, en le faisant, ni affaiblir ni resserrer les liens qui unissent les Principautés Vassales à la Cour Suzeraine. Nous entendons, au contraire, ne leur porter aucune atteinte. . . . . Vous donnerez en même temps au Gouvernement Ottoman l'assurance que ces arrangements, dénués de tout caractère politique, ne seraient signés que par les Ministères et Administrations compétentes et non revêtus de

la sanction Souveraine. De cette façon ils ne sauraient nullement affaiblir aucun des droits de Sa Majesté le Sultan, ni modifier la position garantie par les Traités aux Principautés Vassales vis-à-vis de la Sublime Porte."

On the other hand, the moderation of the reply of the Turkish Government shows a disposition to deal with the question in a practical manner, and, taken with this formal recognition of the Suzerainty of the Porte on the part of the three Powers, seems to indicate that a satisfactory solution of the question ought not to be difficult to attain.

Her Majesty's Government have already intimated that they concur with the Porte that the Principalities have no authority to conclude separate Commercial Conventions. They have no desire to enter into a controversial discussion of the privileges and immunities secured to the Principalities, but they cannot overlook the fact that in none of the various Firmans, diplomatic instruments, or other documents organizing the constitution of the Principalities, is any such authority conferred. On the contrary, the "Règlement Organique de la Principauté de Moldavie" on the 29th of July, 1829, one of the "Règlements Administratifs" confirmed by the Treaties between Russia and the Porte of September 1829 and January 1834, the Hatti Scheriff of 1834, and by the Treaty between the guaranteeing Powers of 1858, provided (paragraph 155), "les commerçants étrangers ne pourront trafiquer dans le pays que suivant la teneur des Traités existants entre la Porte Ottomane et les Puissances dont les commerçants seraient les sujets;" and the XXth Article of the Treaty of Commerce between Great Britain and Turkey of the 29th of April, 1861, stipulated that "the present Treaty shall receive its execution in all and every one of the Provinces of the Ottoman Empire, that is to say, in all possessions of His Imperial Majesty the Sultan situated in Europe or in Asia, in Egypt and in the other parts of Africa belonging to the Sublime Porte, in Servia and in the United Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia."

It is impossible, therefore, for Her Majesty's Government to admit that the Principalities have the right of concluding separate Commercial Conventions.

Nevertheless, regarding the matter in its commercial aspect, Her Majesty's Government must acknowledge that the position of the Principalities in respect to their commercial relations with foreign States is anomalous. While the Principalities have the control over their own tariff, the exercise of this control is limited, by the Treaty engagements of the Porte, within a certain range of duties.

The prosperity of the trade of the United Principalities and the development of their resources under the present system prove that the operation of it has not been oppressive, and that the advantage derived by them from the position secured to them by their political union with the Ottoman Empire has more than counterbalanced any disadvantages or inconvenience arising from the restriction on their complete commercial independence.

The announcement by the Porte of its intention to terminate or revise, at the earliest admissible period, the Commercial Treaties now in force between Turkey and other countries, has, however, materially altered the condition under which this state of things has continued; and Her Majesty's Government had not hesitated to advise the Porte, before the three Powers had thus addressed it, to make such timely concessions as might remove any substantial grievance on the part of the Principalities, so far as that could be done without impairing the political integrity of the Ottoman Empire.

There is no Power which can be more sincerely interested in the welfare and prosperity of the Principalities than Great Britain. Of the total number of vessels which left the Danube in 1873 with the produce, for the most part, of the left bank of the river, 300 steamers, with a tonnage of 193,234 tons, were British; 85, of 40,625 tons, Austrian; 42, of 30,202 tons, French; 25, of 6,836 tons, Russian; 8, of 3,803 tons, Italian; and 2, of 1,183 tons, German. Consul Ward, in his Report on the trade of Galatz for 1871, valued the exports to Great Britain at an average of 1,500,000*l.* a year, and stated that, of the average annual imports into Galatz and Ibraila, from all countries, of 3,000,000*l.*, Great Britain supplied at least 1,000,000*l.* Her Majesty's Government may, accordingly, fairly claim that Great Britain should be heard, not only as one of the Guaranteeing Powers, but as a nation deeply concerned in the trade of the Danube.

The three Governments have represented that "les Traités conclus avec la Turquie reconnaissent aux Principautés une administration douanière séparée, mais l'absence d'engagements contractuels entre ces administrations et celles des autres Etats jette souvent une perturbation regrettable dans les relations douanières respectives. Ces inconvénients augmentent au fur et à mesure du développement progressif des voies de communication qui servent à multiplier les échanges avec les

Puissances voisines, et à donner une impulsion nouvelle au transit des produits des autres pays."

Her Majesty's Government have no doubt that there is foundation for these statements.

The Firman of 1866 conceded to the Principalities the right of making arrangements of a local interest with neighbouring Administrations, in the following terms:—

"A considérer, comme par le passé, obligatoires pour les Principautés Unies tous les Traités et Conventions existant entre ma Sublime Porte et les autres Puissances, en tant qu'ils ne porteraient pas atteinte aux droits des Principautés Unies, établis et reconnus par les actes qui les concernent; à maintenir et respecter également le principe qu'aucun Traité ou Convention ne pourrait être conclus directement par les Principautés Unies avec les Puissances étrangères. Toutefois mon Gouvernement Impérial ne manquera pas à l'avenir de consulter les Principautés Unies sur la disposition de tout Traité ou Convention qui pourrait toucher à leurs lois et règlements commerciaux. Les arrangements d'un intérêt local entre deux Administrations limitrophes, et n'ayant point la forme de Traité officiel ni de caractère politique, continueront à rester en dehors de ces restrictions."

In virtue of this concession various agreements relating to postal matters and the like have been concluded with the Principalities. On the present occasion, however, as the identic representation has been joined in by Germany, the negotiations which the three Powers propose to enter upon with the Principalities would exceed the scope of the Firman, not only in their subject, but also in extending the claim to make agreements to a Power not having a conterminous frontier.

The question then occurs whether the Firman is sufficient to meet the exigencies of the situation, which are, in a great measure, if not wholly, attributable to the notice given by the Porte of the revision of its Commercial Treaties.

The Porte has already accorded to the Khedive of Egypt authority to enter into Commercial Conventions with other States, although the Ottoman Tariff is, and always has been hitherto in force in Egypt, and the difficulty of the Porte contracting for a vassal State having an independent, even though subordinate Tariff, does not arise there. That difficulty would presumably have proved insuperable when the negotiations for the revision of the Turkish Commercial Treaties had been undertaken, and, if that be the case, the representations of the three Powers will only have the effect of hastening, by a few months, a decision as to granting greater commercial liberty to the Principalities which would, under any circumstances, have had to be adopted, in the interest of the Porte itself as well as of the other negotiating Powers.

Her Majesty's Government do not, therefore, think it unreasonable that the steps taken by Austria, Germany, and Russia should be regarded by the Porte as an initiative for the revision of the Treaties which it has itself invited.

At the same time it would appear to be in the interest of the Principalities that the revision of the Turkish Treaties, and the question of the conclusion of separate Customs agreements between other Powers and themselves should be treated as a whole. The Principalities undoubtedly possess certain advantages for their commerce under those Treaties. For example, the VIth Article of the Treaty with Great Britain provides that "any article, the produce or manufacture of a foreign country, intended for importation into the United Principalities of Moldo-Wallachia, or into the Principality of Servia, which shall pass through any other part of the Ottoman Dominions, will not be liable to the payment of Customs duty until it reaches those Principalities." The maintenance of this transit in bond cannot fail to be advantageous to the Principalities, and there must be numerous other matters upon which an understanding with the Porte at the time of the revision of the Treaties must be of equal importance in view of the commercial relations between the Principalities and the Porte as well as between the Principalities and other countries.

It cannot be desirable that there should be a conflicting system of customs on either side of the Danube, aggravated by special provisions of commercial agreements concluded within a few months of each other without any reference to their mutual interests by the Porte and the Principalities.

These considerations appear to Her Majesty's Government to point to the desirability of some understanding being come to through the medium of all the Guaranteeing Powers by which the Porte should acquiesce in foreign States negotiating separately with the United Principalities and with Servia for the conclusion of agreements of a non-political character in regard to Tariffs and Customs Regulations as a part of the revision of the Commercial Treaties of which the Porte has given notice.

I have to request your Excellency to communicate to the Turkish Government the views of Her Majesty's Government as expressed in this despatch, of which a copy will also be sent to Her Majesty's Representatives at Vienna, Berlin, St. Petersburgh, Rome, and Paris, with instructions to communicate it to the Governments to which they are respectively accredited.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 110.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lytton.

(No. 671.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, November* 20, 1874.

I TRANSMIT to your Lordship herewith, for your information and for communication to the French Government, a copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople stating the views of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the conclusion of Commercial Conventions between the Danubian Principalities and foreign Powers.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 111.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 23.)

(No. 326. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Buda-Pesth, November* 16, 1874.

IN a conversation which I had yesterday with Count Andrassy I inquired whether he had answered the instructions addressed by the Porte to the Turkish Ambassadors in Austria, Germany, and Russia on the subject of the communication made to it by those Powers as to the conclusion of Commercial Conventions with Roumania.

His Excellency said that he had not, as the statements and suggestions in the despatch had been fully answered before it was written, and he had nothing further to say on the subject, repeating what he has frequently stated as to his entertaining no doubt himself that the privileges granted to the Principalities and Servia gave them complete liberty to legislate as to tariff and customs, and to make arrangements with respect to them with their neighbours. If the Porte, therefore, had seen fit to give a political character to a purely domestic and economic question, it has only itself to blame.

I observed that, even admitting that the Porte may have, by the suggestion in their despatch, increased the difficulty of attaining a solution of the question satisfactory to all parties, it seemed to me that he might nevertheless answer the despatch, explaining more fully that the Government of Austria-Hungary had no intention of entering into Conventions with Roumania as a Sovereign State, but merely wished to make an arrangement with her which appeared to them to come within the scope of the privileges which she can exercise under the Treaty of Paris, and that he might thus invite a further consideration of the question at Constantinople, so as to leave it open to amicable arrangement. His Excellency, however, said that he could not state this more explicitly than had been already done; that he had not decided on placing the commercial relations of the Empire on a better footing with the vassal States of Turkey until he had satisfied himself that he had the same right to regulate these matters by Ministerial Conventions as questions relating to telegraphs, posts, and railways, and that though he had paid the Porte the compliment of making a preliminary communication to it, from a wish to manifest his respect for the Suzerain authority of the Sultan, as this act of courtesy had been used at Constantinople to raise a political difficulty which was foreign to the question, he could neither be deterred by the introduction of such an element into the discussion from carrying out his intentions, nor could he assist the Porte in extricating itself from an embarrassment which it had wilfully created.

According to his usual practice of illustrating his opinions he said:—My wish is to allow the relations of Austria-Hungary with the vassal provinces of Turkey to flow quietly within the dykes which have been created by Treaties, and another system

* No. 109.

could only end in causing obstructions which would lead to their overflowing those dykes; he said Servia has frequently changed her Tariffs on Austrian produce, and as Austria-Hungary is the only country through which she has an outlet for her pigs, we have been occasionally obliged to adopt reprisals or threaten her with them, and it is reasonable that we should wish to provide against such misunderstandings by a Convention with the Servian Government. I asked whether it were true, as alleged in the newspapers, that negotiations had already been opened for the conclusion of a Convention with Roumania, and he admitted that proposals had been received from Bucharest as to the questions which should be included in such a Commercial Convention, but as they would require much study and examination, there was no probability of any immediate agreement being come to between the two Governments. He said that he had just learnt from Count Beust that your Lordship had spoken of the necessity, in the event of the new Tariff arrangements between Roumania and Austria-Hungary of a Customs line being established between the Principality and Turkey, and he would inform Count Beust that this line already existed.

Although it is to be regretted that Count Andrassy's opinions on this question have been entirely different from the views taken of it by Her Majesty's Government, and that the Principalities have been thus encouraged to act with arrogance and presumption, I must do his Excellency the justice to say that his language upon it has generally been consistent, and that since it was first mooted he has always maintained that unratified Commercial Conventions came clearly and legally within the circle of the arrangements which the Principalities are entitled to make with neighbouring countries. I think it right to make this observation as some remarks made to me by Baron Hofmann, and which would convey a different impression of the opinions of the Austro-Hungarian Government, have been commented upon very justly by Sir H. Elliot in his despatch No. 228 of the 13th ultimo. Baron Hofmann certainly held the language which I reported, and I can only account for it by his believing at the time that the question would be settled amicably with the Porte in conformity with the wishes of Austria, and by his being desirous, therefore, to show that there was no real difference in the views of the Governments of the Emperor King and of Her Majesty respecting it. The French Ambassador lately, in speaking to me of his relations with Count Andrassy said, that though their views might differ, it was satisfactorily to feel, in a conversation with his Excellency, that he always expressed his opinions honestly and frankly; and, as I concur in the Marquis d'Harcourt's appreciation of his Excellency's character, I have no doubt that Baron Hofmann, though I felt it to be my duty to report his words, which he would now probably explain as referring to Treaties with a foreign State to be ratified by the Sovereign, was alone responsible for them, and it would therefore be extremely inconvenient if an incautious use were made of my despatch in which they were mentioned.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

Inclosure in No. 111.

Mr. Monson to Sir A. Buchanan.

Sir, *Buda-Pesth, November* 17, 1874.

LERMED EFFENDI, the Turkish Consul-General here, told me this morning that he had succeeded in obtaining some information as to the nature of the proposals made by the Government of Prince Charles in reference to the contemplated commercial Convention between Austria-Hungary, and Roumania. According to this information the Roumanian Government proposes that in future no duties shall be levied on grain imported from the Principalities into Austria-Hungary; and in compensation for this concession Prince Charles' advisers will, on their side, agree to a reduction of the existing duties on textile fabrics, leather and hides, saddlery, and vehicles of all kinds, manufactured in Austria-Hungary, and imported into Roumania. These, said Lermed Effendi, are the most important points of the project, the rest of which is made up of modifications of the existing Tariff on other articles.

I find that my Turkish colleague holds the same opinion respecting Count Andrassy's motives in pursuing his present policy, as I have heard enunciated by several Hungarians, who are staunch adherents and admirers of his Excellency, and who consider him to be above all things a true "patriot," in the Magyar acceptation of the word. According to this opinion, the Count has an eye to the revision of the Ten

Years' Pact between the Cis and Trans-Leithan divisions of the monarchy, and will use this commercial Convention as a means towards relieving Hungary of a considerable share of her financial obligations towards Austria. Hungary being in no sense whatever a manufacturing country, will, it is argued, derive no benefit from the stipulations of the new Convention. On the contrary, if those stipulations have been correctly stated above, she will be forced to admit, free of duty, from the Principalities, an article which is her own staple produce, and for the protection of which she recently insisted, contrary to the wishes of the Vienna Government, on the re-establishment of the duties which had been suspended for twelve months since the 1st October, 1873. She will thus, it is considered, be in a position to claim from Austria, on the occasion of the revision of the Pact, a diminution of her present charges (which the Hungarians always maintain are inequitably heavy upon them), as a set off to her concurrence in the conclusion of a Commercial Treaty with the Principalities, from which she herself will have gained nothing

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. MONSON.

No. 112.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received November* 23.)

(No. 105. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Rome, November* 20, 1874.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 99 of the 14th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that, in a recent conversation with M. Visconti Venosta, the subject of the Principalities was again alluded to. His Excellency asked me if I had heard what were the views of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the question at issue; in reply to which I gave his Excellency, from memory, the substance of your Lordship's answer to the Turkish Ambassador, as stated in your Lordship's despatch to Sir Henry Elliot, No. 203 of the 31st of October, a copy of which was inclosed to me in your Lordship's despatch No. 194, Confidential, of the 13th instant, to the effect that "Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that the Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia did not possess authority to conclude Commercial Treaties with foreign Powers, and concurred with the Porte that such Treaties, if entered into, would be in violation of existing Treaty engagements. At the same time, Her Majesty's Government had not hesitated to advise the Porte to make such timely concessions as might serve to remove any substantial grievance on the part of the Principalities, so far as that could be done without injury to the political integrity of the Ottoman Empire." I I added that Her Majesty's Government had declined to pledge themselves as to any definite course of action in regard to the joint representations addressed to the Porte by the Governments of Austria, Germany, and Russia, and reserved that matter for further consideration.

M. Visconti Venosta was glad to think that his advice to the Porte (the tenor of which is reported in my despatch No. 99 above mentioned) was essentially the same as that which had been given by Her Majesty's Government. He could not help thinking that the Porte was contending for a shadow; that practically, even in the case where it had been stipulated in a Commercial Treaty with the Porte that the said Treaty should be applicable in the Principalities, special arrangements in regard to Tariff, &c., had always to be made with the Government of the Principalities.

Such was the case, at least in regard to the Treaty between Italy and Turkey. There was one Tariff in Moldavia and Wallachia, and another in Turkey.

Proceeding in his remarks, M. Visconti Venosta observed that what appeared to him the most serious part of the course now taken by Austria, Germany, and Russia, was the further blow it inflicted upon the Treaty of 1856; one of the essential stipulations of which was that, in the event of any question arising regarding the affairs of the East, it should, before any action was taken by any one of the signatory Powers, become the subject of joint deliberation between them all. Now if the precedent of separate action on the part of one or more of these Powers was once admitted, what might not be the consequence of such a precedent on some future occasion? On the other hand, M. Visconti, in agreement apparently with the language held to Lord Lyton by the Due Decazes, as reported in his Lordship's despatch No. 1090, Confidential, and inclosed to me in copy in your Lordship's despatch No. 197 of the 13th instant, was far from advocating joint action on the part

of the other Powers in opposition to the steps now taken by the Northern Powers, and thus as it were dividing the Powers who had signed the Treaty of 1856 into two camps.

The Italian Government, he said, had, perhaps, fewer interests at stake in the Principalities than in almost any other part of the Ottoman Dominions, but they attached the highest importance to the maintenance of the political integrity of the Turkish Empire, and nothing would suit them less than that there should be a revival at the present moment of the so-called Eastern Question.

I asked M. Visconti Venosta if it did not appear to him strange that Austria, which had hitherto been one of the firmest supporters of the existing state of things in Turkey, should now be taking a course which was calculated to weaken the Sultan's authority. His Excellency replied that there had no doubt been a change in Austrian policy in regard to Turkey, and, from having been, as I had just said, one of the warmest supporters of the Turkish Government, she now seemed to attach greater importance to the cultivation of the friendship of the Provinces bordering on her frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 113.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received November* 23.)

(No. 291. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, November* 15, 1874.

AN experienced colleague observed to me to-day that he followed with special interest the rapid progress made by the three Diplomatic Agents Prince Charles had sent out last year to Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg to advocate the independence of Roumania.

Six months ago their mission appeared hopeless, and now they could boast of having obtained the active support of the three allied Empires, whose collective action at Constantinople in favour of their commercial independence somewhat resembled an ultimatum.

To what influences was the change in their favour, to what interests the unexpected success of their mission due, and to what secret motives was the mode of proceeding adopted by the three great Powers to be ascribed, who instead of inducing the Porte, by separate negotiation voluntarily and without the appearance of violating Treaty rights, to concede the demands of Roumania for commercial freedom, have preferred to follow a course not unlike that of Prince Gortchakow in the Black Sea question? Both proceedings were equally contrary to the Treaty of Paris, both calculated to weaken the authority of the Porte, both inspired by the impotence of France and the neutrality of England. It was said that Count Andrassy, who led the attack, was actuated solely by the commercial interests of Austria, Prince Bismarck and Prince Gortchakow solely by their wish to support Austria in a matter to which she attached great importance; but might it not perhaps be added that both did not appear to object to an occasional violation of the Treaty of Paris—the former to weaken the influence of France, the latter to weaken the position of Turkey? Without, however, entering further into the many conjectures the collective action of the three great Powers gave rise to, he could not forget or refrain from noting that as far back as 1862 Prince Bismarck told the Austrian Minister at Berlin that Austria had nothing to do in Germany, and should "turn to the East to find her centre of gravity;" that in subsequent public speeches before the war of 1866 his Highness declared that Austria must retire from the German Confederation, and might compensate herself by extending her influence down the Danube; and that during the war he talked of compelling Austria to remove her capital from Vienna to Pesth.

The conclusion to be drawn from these recollections was that Prince Bismarck in promoting the commercial interests of Austria in the Danubian Principalities might possibly also be promoting the political interests of Germany in Austria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 114.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 23.)

(No. 297.)
My Lord, *Berlin, November 21, 1874.*

I HAVE not seen Herr von Bülow lately, but I understand on good authority that the allied Governments of Germany, Austria, and Russia, have agreed to leave the reply of the Turkish Government to their collective step at Constantinople in favour of the Commercial Independence of Roumania unanswered for the present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

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114 A.

*The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.**

(No. 207.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, November 23, 1874.*

I TRANSMIT herewith to your Excellency, for communication to Count Andrassy, copy of a despatch which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,† giving the views of Her Majesty's Government upon the question of the right of the Principalities to conclude Commercial Conventions without obtaining the sanction of the Porte.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 114 B.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 208.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, November 23, 1874.*

COUNT BEUST spoke to me to-day on the subject of the claim of the Roumanians to the right of concluding Commercial Conventions without the sanction of the Porte. His Excellency observed that the language held on this subject by the Turkish Representatives was, if he was correctly informed, not uniform in its spirit. While their Ambassador in London was protesting altogether against any admission of the claim, their Ambassador at Berlin, Aristarchi Bey, was said to have stated to the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires that the Porte would be quite satisfied if an agreement were to be come to between the Principalities and the Treaty Powers that any Conventions which might be concluded should, before coming into operation, be submitted to it for its sanction. The two Ambassadors could not, he remarked, both represent accurately the views of their Government, and he inquired whether we had heard of the statement made at Berlin. He did not, he said, suppose that the Principalities would agree to an arrangement of the nature indicated, if it should be suggested to them; but he would be glad to know whether any intimation of the idea of such a solution of the question being entertained had reached Her Majesty's Government.

I informed him that I had seen the Turkish Ambassador to-day, who had not made any reference to the suggested arrangement, nor had his Excellency done so on any previous occasion. I added that it was the first time I had heard the idea mooted.

Count Beust, in discussing the subject, did not speak as decidedly as Count Andrassy appears to have spoken to your Excellency, as to the utter impossibility of any solution being found which would enable the Porte to retire with dignity from her present position, but, if he had in his mind any idea as to a possible compromise, he did not say anything which could lead me to conjecture what might be its nature.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

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* A similar despatch was addressed to Lord Odo Russell. † No. 109.

No. 115.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 24.)

(No. 268.)
My Lord, *Therapia, November 3, 1874.*

BY his despatch No. 51 of the 22nd ultimo, of which I received a copy to-day, Mr. Vivian conveyed to your Lordship the feelings prevailing at Bucharest towards the several guaranteeing Powers.

It can cause no surprise to find that the consistent policy of Her Majesty's Government in supporting the integrity of the Treaty arrangements, upon which it has been the constant aim of the Roumanians to encroach, should have rendered them unpopular in the Principalities, or should be distorted into a supposed wish to stifle their healthy development.

Upon the question which has now arisen, Her Majesty's Government have throughout approved the language that I held in encouraging the Porte to lend a favourable ear to any application that might be made for the extension of the commercial privileges of the Principalities, but the advocates of the present pretensions invariably mix up two totally distinct questions.

They dwell upon, and possibly overrate, the progress that has been made and the stability of the institutions, and then they seem to think that they have proved their case; failing to see that, however great that progress may have been, and however much it may qualify the Principalities for further privileges, which it may be desirable to concede, it can give them no possible right to break from their position towards their Suzerain without his consent and that of the other parties to the Treaties which define it.

I can imagine few things more dangerous for the future tranquillity of the East, than the adoption of the theory that the position of the vassal States is to be regulated by what they assume to be their requirements or necessities, instead of by the international arrangements.

The persistent refusal of Prince Charles to address himself to the Porte to obtain the removal of what he represents as grievous restrictions, can, as I have already more than once observed to your Lordship, leave no doubt that the real object which he has in view is much less the withdrawal of commercial disabilities than the assertion of an important political right which, at least till very lately, no Government pretended that he possessed.

Mr. Vivian submits to the consideration of Her Majesty's Government whether it might not be well, by supporting the wishes of the Principalities on the present occasion, to secure for them a portion of the popularity which will otherwise pass exclusively into the hands of the three Northern Powers; but this would be dearly purchased at the cost of our position as the steady advocates of the maintenance of the Treaties by which the integrity of this Empire and the rights of the Sultan are secured, for it is the confidence that is felt in Great Britain in this respect which here constitutes our principal strength, and on all questions of real importance and in all cases of emergency, ensures for the voice of Her Majesty's Government a respect and attention such as is given to no other Power.

Austria has in the present instance led the way in bidding against Russia for popularity in the Principalities, and may secure it for the moment; but if she has no other object in view than the commercial considerations which are alleged, I am greatly mistaken if she does not find before very long that she has committed a serious political error.

The result of her present course, as far as I can foresee it, will be, that Commercial Conventions, under whatever shape or title, will be concluded with the Principalities, in spite of the protest of the Porte, which will henceforth identify the Austro-Hungarian Government with that of Russia in a supposed design to weaken the Treaties of 1856; while, on the other hand, the success of his late defiance of his Suzerain will necessarily encourage Prince Charles in preparing another step towards the independence at which he is aiming.

Count Andrassy affirms that he is resolved to discountenance any such design; but since he has openly avowed his policy of inducing the vassal populations to look to him for support rather than to Russia, he will find it impossible to stop short.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 116.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 24.)

(No. 272. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Therapia, November 5, 1874.*

AARIFI PASHA spoke to me this afternoon of a report which he had received from the Turkish Ambassador at Vienna, of a curious conversation with M. Hoffmann, on the subject of the Roumanian Treaties.

Raschid Pasha reports, that upon learning the late identic communication of the three Powers, he observed to Baron Hoffmann that it was contrary to the previous intimation of the Austro-Hungarian Government, that after Count Zichy's first communication on the subject, it had no present intention of pursuing the matter further.

Baron Hoffmann replied that it was quite true that Count Andrassy had expressed himself in that sense; but the Porte had forced him to depart from his original plan, as they had thought fit to appeal to the Governments of Berlin and St. Petersburgh for support against the proposal of Austria.

Aarifi Pasha states that the reason given by Baron Hoffmann is entirely imaginary, the Porte never having made any appeal of the nature mentioned to the two Governments; and he seems to regard it merely as an indication of the wish of Austria to avoid assuming, in the eyes of the Porte, the sole responsibility of what is in fact her own act.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 117.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 24.)

(No. 56.)

My Lord, *Bucharest, November 13, 1874.*

SINCE the date of my last despatch sufficiently important progress seems to have been made at Constantinople to justify the confidence of the Roumanian Government in the successful issue of their demand for complete commercial liberty. I give the version of events that is current here.

The Representatives of Austria, Germany, and Russia are said to have sent in an identic Declaration to the Porte that, in the opinion of their Governments, the Principalities have the right to conclude directly with foreign Powers arrangements concerning their commerce, Customs, and Tariff, without any violation of existing Treaties, and that such arrangements or Conventions cannot be held to affect the political ties between the Porte and the Principalities.

The Porte, it is said, has replied through its Representatives at Berlin, Vienna, and at St. Petersburgh to the effect that it is not indisposed to sanction the demand of the Principalities, provided it is kept within Treaty limits by being addressed directly to the Porte. Copies of the correspondence are said to have been sent to the other guaranteeing Powers.

I have already informed your Lordship that the Roumanian Government will not consent to make this appeal directly to the Porte, nor to beg as a favour what they conceive to be their right, and they now await the issue of the proceeding of the three Great Powers with every confidence in its success, but with some anxiety as to the probable course of action of England and France.

Meanwhile the articles in the semi-official Government papers, which are full of the matter, are conciliatory towards Turkey, yet firm in maintaining the assumed rights of the Principalities. The moderate tone of the Turkish note is noticed with satisfaction, but she is strongly advised "not to persevere in a useless resistance which cannot but turn to her disadvantage; to seek to cultivate rather than alienate the sympathies of the Principalities, and to treat them as good neighbours whose geographical position might make them a strong and serviceable barrier against foreign aggression if tenanted by a free people with friendly sympathies."

Sincere and lasting gratitude is expressed towards Austria, Germany, and Russia for their action, which is loudly praised. France is still blamed for her attitude, but more mildly, as she is thought to show signs of returning to her old friendly policy towards Roumania, while entire ignorance is professed as to the course that England will take, although it is feared, from reports coming from Constantinople, that she is far from friendly to the cause of the Principalities.

The Roumanian Agents at Vienna and St. Petersburgh, who have been here on leave of absence, are under orders to return to their posts at once.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 118.

Lord Lytton to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 25.)

(No. 1121.)

My Lord, *Paris, November 24, 1874.*

I HAVE read to the Duc Decazes your Lordship's instructions to Sir Henry Elliot, inclosed in your despatch to me No. 671 of the 20th instant, on the subject of the Roumanian Treaties, and have given his Excellency a copy of it.

The Duke has expressed to me his complete and cordial satisfaction with the terms of this instruction, to which he listened with the closest attention, and which he subsequently characterized as a remarkably able State paper. He thanked me warmly for the copy of it, which I was authorized by your Lordship to leave with him, and assured me that his own instructions to the French Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople will be based upon it, and in strict accordance with the views which it expresses.

Count Apponyi, who appears to me a little embarrassed by the obligation of defending the policy of his present Chief, has drawn my attention to the inclosed letter published by the "Journal des Débats," and purporting to be from its Vienna correspondent, explanatory of the policy of the Cabinet of Vienna in reference to the Roumanian Treaties.

The authorship of this letter the Austrian Ambassador ascribes to the Chancery of Vienna, and the Duc Decazes informs me that it is written by Baron Hoffmann.

Count Apponyi dwells with satisfaction on the rejection by Count Andrassy of the draft Treaty submitted to his acceptance by the Roumanian Government, and he refers to the fact of it as evidence that Austria is neither precipitous in her Roumanian policy, nor ready to acquiesce in everything which the Principalities demand.

Baron Prokesch is now in Paris. I have not seen him; but the Duc Decazes informs me that he speaks with great reprobation of the present Oriental policy of the Austro-Hungarian Government. This, however, is natural.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYTTON.

Inclosure in No. 118.

Extract from the "Journal des Debats" of November 24, 1874.

UN de nos correspondants Viennois nous fournit des renseignements fort détaillés sur le différend qui a surgi entre l'Autriche et la Turquie à l'occasion du projet de la première de ces Puissances de conclure une Convention Commerciale avec la Roumanie. Tout en réservant notre opinion sur la question de droit engagée dans cette affaire, nous reproduisons le travail de notre correspondant parce que nous y trouvons l'exposition très complète des vues et des arguments d'une des parties intéressées, du Cabinet de Vienne :—

"Le rapprochement entre l'Autriche et la Russie," nous écrit-on, "rapprochement qui a mis fin à leur antagonisme en Orient, ne laisse pas de travailler fortement l'imagination de certains publicistes orabrageux. Depuis le moment où ces rapports nouveaux entre les deux Puissances sont devenus manifestes, le Cabinet de Vienne se voit attribuer des arrière-pensées et des plans passablement aventureux. On parle d'un changement radical dans sa politique à l'égard de la Turquie; on le représente comme ayant rompu avec toutes ses traditions; on l'accuse même de s'être entendu avec la Russie pour hâter la dissolution de l'Empire Ottoman. L'intention énoncée par le Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois de conclure directement avec les Principautés Danubiennes un arrangement commercial à ravivé ces appréhensions. On a singulièrement exagéré la portée de cette affaire, dont les détails sont généralement fort peu connus, et on a déjà entrevu, à ces propos, le Traité de Paris déchiré, les liens entre les Principautés vassales et la Cour Suzeraine rompus, l'intégrité de la Turquie gravement entamée.

"Il suffit de considérer un moment la nature de la monarchie Austro-Hongroise,

sa situation géographique et ethnographique, la place qu'elle occupe dans le système Européen, pour reconnaître que, de toutes les Puissances, elle est la moins faite pour des changements radicaux dans sa politique extérieure, la moins apte à des procédés révolutionnaires dans cette sphère. Les conditions mêmes de son existence en font le gardien naturel de l'ordre établi par les Traités, le défenseur des principes conservateurs dans le domaine des rapports internationaux. L'intégrité de l'Empire Ottoman reste, comme elle a été, un des principes fondamentaux de la politique du Cabinet de Vienne, et son rapprochement avec la Russie n'a été possible que parce que la Russie a reconnu la nécessité de maintenir le *statu quo* en Orient. Il y a une seule innovation dans la politique Orientale de l'Autriche: le Comte Andrassy y a fait entrer pour une part très large les intérêts commerciaux de la monarchie. Ces intérêts étaient autrefois négligés ou subordonnés à des considérations politiques; il les a mis au premier plan. Il s'est proposé d'ouvrir à l'industrie et au commerce de l'Autriche-Hongrie de larges débouchés en Orient, de faciliter, d'activer et d'étendre les échanges avec les pays que la nature elle-même a placés dans l'orbite de la civilisation Austro-Hongroise. La jonction des chemins de fer Autrichiens et Hongrois avec les lignes Roumaines et Turques, les travaux entrepris à la Porte-de-Fer, de concert avec les Gouvernements coriverains, dans le but de délivrer d'obstacles la navigation du Danube, ont inauguré cette politique. Le projet de régler les rapports commerciaux de l'Autriche-Hongrie avec les Principautés Danubiennes par un accord direct avec les Gouvernements princiers est un nouveau pas dans cette voie. En mettant en avant ce projet, le Cabinet de Vienne n'a nullement songé à soulever une question politique; il a considéré et considère cette affaire comme purement économique et même locale. Elle a été imposée par d'impérieuses nécessités économiques, provoquée par des intérêts matériels en souffrance, rendue indispensable par l'état de choses particulier qui subsiste dans les Principautés. Mais, en poursuivant la réalisation de son idée, le Cabinet de Vienne n'a pas oublié un moment les droits et les prérogatives que la Porte tient des Traités; toutes ses démarches, tous les documents relatifs à cette affaire, démontrent qu'il en a tenu scrupuleusement compte, tout en s'efforçant de les concilier avec les exigences légitimes du commerce Austro-Hongrois.

"La dénonciation par la Turquie de ses Traités de Commerce avec les Puissances étrangères a été l'occasion extérieure qui a fait surgir cette question des arrangements douaniers séparés avec les Principautés—question étudiée déjà depuis deux ans dans les bureaux des Ministères du Commerce Autrichien et Hongrois. Le Traité de Commerce Austro-Turc de 1862 n'a jamais eu d'application à la Roumanie et à la Serbie. Ces Principautés, tout en formant des parties intégrantes de l'Empire Ottoman sous le rapport politique, jouissent depuis longtemps d'une complète autonomie administrative intérieure, et notamment en matière de commerce. Le Traité en question leur reconnait une administration douanière séparée; le second Article Additionnel de cette Acte porte que par ses stipulations 'on n'entend rien changer au *statu quo* actuellement existant dans les Principautés de Moldavie, de Valachie, et de Serbie relativement aux droits d'importation et d'exportation.' Or, ce *statu quo*, qui, par rapport à l'Autriche, remonte aussi loin que le Traité de Passarovitz de 1718, est de tout point intolérable. Les Principautés constituant sous le rapport douanier des territoires absolument indépendants, leurs Gouvernements, en l'absence des engagements contractuels pris spontanément, peuvent régler à leur gré le taux des droits d'entrée et de sortie, et surélever à volonté leurs Tarifs, même au delà du taux fixé par les Traités conclus entre les Etats étrangers et la Porte. Ces Gouvernements, en effet, usent et abusent de cette faculté dans une large mesure; il en résulte que le commerce étranger avec les Principautés est exposé à des incertitudes, à des perturbations qui lui sont fort préjudiciables, et comme, par suite de leur position géographique, le commerce Austro-Hongrois avec ces pays est le plus considérable, c'est lui qui en souffre particulièrement. En outre, les municipalités en Roumanie imposent arbitrairement, sous le nom d'octroi, sur toute espèce de marchandises étrangères, des surtaxes qui portent les charges de certains articles à des taux fabuleux. On cite comme curiosité les cartes à jouer, qui paient un droit de 733 pour cent de leur valeur. Si on y ajoute les chicanes fiscales et les vexations innombrables auxquelles sont exposés les commerçants étrangers et leurs marchandises, si enfin on met en compte les abus et les exactions des employés Roumains qui ne brillent pas précisément par leur intégrité, on a devant soi une situation vraiment indigne d'Etats civilisés. La multiplication des voies de communication et l'augmentation des échanges, qui ont presque doublé entre l'Autriche-Hongrie et la Roumanie pendant ces dernières années, rendent encore plus sensibles au commerce ces inconvénients et ces entraves, et il devient de plus en plus urgent d'y porter remède.

"Il n'est pas possible au Cabinet de Vienne de chercher ce remède à Constantinople, en adressant à la Porte des reclamations dans des cas spéciaux. La Porte n'a aucun pouvoir réel et direct dans les Principautés; leur législation et leur administration douanière en particulier échappent entièrement à son action; il serait donc tout à fait inutile de réclamer son appui.

"D'un autre côté, il serait également peu pratique de conclure avec elle un Traité de Commerce embrassant la Roumanie et la Serbie, et s'étendant à leurs tarifs; car la Porte ne pourrait ni surveiller ni assurer l'exécution de ce Traité. Quand on connaît la disposition des esprits qui règne à Bucarest, les aspirations et les passions qui agitent le pays, on peut être certain que les Chambres Roumaines repousseraient un pareil Traité, sans vouloir même l'examiner. Dans ce cas, il ne resterait plus à la Porte que d'en poursuivre l'application par la force, c'est-à-dire de prendre directement en main le service des douanes et de garnir de ses troupes les frontières des Principautés du côté de l'Autriche-Hongrie. Mais ce serait là une très grosse affaire. A part toute autre considération, cette mesure ne pourrait être prise qu'en vertu d'un accord préalable avec les Puissances garantes, comme l'exige l'Article XXVII du Traité de Paris pour le cas d'une intervention armée, et il est plus que probable que la Porte reculerait elle-même devant une pareille aventure. Le Traité signé avec elle resterait donc lettre morte.

"Ainsi, au point de vue pratique, il faut reconnaître que les rapports commerciaux avec les Principautés ne peuvent être réglés efficacement que par des arrangements directs avec leurs Gouvernements. Arrivé à cette conclusion, le Cabinet de Vienne s'est trouvé devant une question de droit et a dû examiner si les Traités existants ne s'opposaient pas à cette manière de procéder. Le Traité de Paris du 30 Mars, 1856, Traité décisif dans cette affaire, ne contient aucune disposition qui défende expressément aux Principautés de conclure avec des Etats étrangers des Conventions Commerciales sans caractère politique. Les stipulations de ce Traité sont plutôt susceptibles d'une interprétation favorable aux Principautés. L'Article XXIII, concernant la Valachie et la Moldavie, s'exprime ainsi: 'La Sublime Porte s'engage à conserver aux dites Principautés une administration indépendante et nationale, ainsi que la pleine liberté de culte, de législation, de commerce et de navigation.' L'Article XXVIII, relatif à la Serbie, est conçu en termes exactement pareils. La Convention du 19 Août, 1858, qui a constitué les Principautés Roumaines, confirme expressément ces privilèges et immunités. Le texte de ces actes ne distingue pas entre le commerce intérieur et le commerce extérieur. Cette distinction, nécessaire dans la science, au point de vue de la méthode, utile dans les bureaux d'un Ministère, au point de vue de la division du travail, se confond dans la vie et dans la pratique; économiquement, le commerce intérieur et le commerce extérieur ne sont que deux manifestations de l'ensemble du mouvement commercial. Il est surtout difficile d'établir cette distinction politiquement, dans un pays possédant une aussi large autonomie que les Principautés. Un pouvoir qui administre et légifère en matière de douanes, qui décrète, modifie, élève les tarifs, touche nécessairement au commerce extérieur. L'Autriche aussi bien que d'autres Etats, pour assurer la marche régulière des affaires commerciales de leurs nationaux avec les Principautés, sont constamment obligés de s'adresser non pas à la Porte, mais aux autorités locales, aux Gouvernements Princiers. Ces Gouvernements entrent donc en contact direct avec des Etats étrangers par rapport au commerce extérieur. Par quelle raison logique ne leur serait-il pas permis de faire avec ces Etats des arrangements durables en matière de douanes et de tarifs?

"Si les Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris avaient voulu réduire l'autonomie des Principautés à la direction du commerce intérieur, elles auraient constaté expressément cette restriction et déclaré en termes précis que la Roumanie et la Serbie seraient liées dorénavant par les Traités de Commerce conclus entre la Porte et les Etats étrangers. Mais il n'en est rien. Il faut en conclure que l'expression 'pleine liberté commerciale' doit être entendue dans le sens le plus large, c'est-à-dire que le commerce extérieur est compris dans le domaine de l'autonomie des Principautés. Cette conclusion est conforme aux règles établies, en fait d'interprétation des Traités, par des écrivains qui font autorité en droit international. Sans remonter jusqu'à Grotius ou Vattel, jusqu'à la fameuse distinction entre 'les choses favorables' et 'les choses odieuses,' dont les premières admettent une interprétation extensive, on peut citer Heffter, qui dit: 'Ce qui découle des termes d'une stipulation comme une conséquence nécessaire doit être considéré comme y étant compris tacitement.'—(*Das Europäische Völkerrecht*, § 95). Une fois admis que le commerce extérieur fait partie du domaine de l'autonomie des Principautés, les conséquences se produisent d'elles-mêmes. Depuis des années plusieurs questions appartenant à ce domaine ont

fait l'objet de Conventions directes entre les Gouvernements Princiers et des Etats étrangers. Ainsi l'Autriche-Hongrie a conclu avec la Roumanie deux Conventions sur la jonction des chemins de fer, un cartel d'extradition, une Convention Consulaire, une Convention Postale, et une Convention Télégraphique, et la Porte n'a jamais fait aucune objection à ces arrangements directs. Pourquoi ne serait-il pas permis de négocier, d'après ces précédents, une Convention sur les affaires commerciales qui sont manifestement comprises dans l'autonomie des Principautés?

"Si maintenant on se rapporte au Firman d'Investiture du Prince Charles de Hohenzollern en 1866, il faut reconnaître que la question de droit devient douteuse, au moins en ce qui concerne la Roumanie. Cet Acte du Sultan porte que 'le Prince s'engage à maintenir et à respecter le principe qu'aucun Traité ni Convention ne pourraient être conclus directement par les Principautés.' Mais d'abord il y aurait à remarquer que le Firman d'Investiture ne fait pas partie du droit international Européen; ce n'est pas un Traité, c'est un acte du droit public interne de la Turquie et qui, par conséquent, n'a pas pour les Puissances étrangères l'autorité d'un Traité signé et garanti par elles. Puis la restriction du Firman ne peut s'appliquer en aucun cas à la Serbie; or, il serait injuste de traiter moins bien la Roumanie que la Serbie, car il ressort clairement du Traité de Paris que les Puissances garantes avaient l'intention de placer l'une et l'autre dans une situation exactement pareille et égale. Enfin, le Firman lui-même n'est pas aussi absolu et ne va pas jusqu'à l'exclusion de toute négociation directe; il contient une clause qui permet 'les arrangements d'intérêt local entre les deux administrations limitrophes et n'ayant point la forme de Traités officiels ni de caractère politique.' Ainsi, d'après l'Acte du Suzerain, il est au moins incontestable que le Gouvernement Roumain a le droit de traiter avec les Gouvernements Russe et Austro-Hongrois sans formes solennels sur des sujets non politiques et de nature locale. Or, les douanes et les tarifs, abandonnés à l'autonomie de la Roumanie, peuvent bien, à la rigueur, être considérés comme une affaire locale par rapport à l'ensemble de l'Empire Ottoman.

"Quoi qu'il en soit, le Cabinet de Vienne, trouvant, d'un côté, que les Traités autorisaient les Principautés à négocier directement avec les Etats étrangers en matière de commerce, ou du moins ne le leur défendaient pas positivement, mais reconnaissant, de l'autre, que le Firman d'Investiture rendait la question en partie douteuse, n'a pas voulu, pour agir, se fonder uniquement sur sa propre interprétation. Pour mettre fin aux doutes, aux incertitudes, aux interprétations contraires, et en même temps pour marquer sa déférence à l'égard du Sultan, le Cabinet de Vienne a résolu de s'adresser à Constantinople et de solliciter la Porte d'accorder à la Roumanie et à la Serbie l'autorisation de conclure des arrangements commerciaux sans caractère politique. En procédant ainsi, il ménageait les susceptibilités de la Porte, manifestait son respect pour ses prérogatives, mettait hors de doute les droits de la Cour Suzeraine, et les reconnaissait de la manière la moins équivoque. La démarche résolue était de tout point correcte et conforme aux Traités.

"Le Cabinet de Vienne espérait que la Porte se prêterait de bonne grâce à cette combinaison. Il croyait qu'il lui serait difficile de refuser aux Principautés ce que, par son Firman de 1873, elle a si aisément accordé au Khédive d'Egypte, qu'elle n'a cependant pas cessé de considérer seulement comme Gouverneur héréditaire de province. Une réponse favorable de la Porte paraissait d'autant plus probable qu'elle avait permis, en diverses occasions, à ses Représentants de siéger à titre égal avec les Plénipotentiaires des Principautés, et de signer avec eux des documents qui avaient incontestablement un caractère international. Ainsi, tout récemment encore, pendant les délibérations relatives aux travaux de la Porte-de-Fer, l'Agent Roumain et l'Agent Serbe siégeaient et signaient à côté du Commissaire Turc.

"En décidant sa démarche à Constantinople, le Cabinet de Vienne a fait en même temps connaître à toutes les Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris ses vues dans cette affaire, et a demandé leur avis; mais dès ce moment déjà, c'est-à-dire, dès le mois de Juin, il s'est réservé, pour le cas d'un refus de la Porte, la faculté d'user d'un expédient. Il a déclaré que, dans ce cas, il ne lui resterait qu'à suivre le mode de procéder dont il s'était déjà servi et auquel ont aussi eu recours d'autres Puissances, c'est-à-dire, à convenir avec les Gouvernements Princiers des stipulations nécessaires, sauf à ne pas donner la forme de Conventions solennelles aux actes qui les consacreraient et à ne les faire ratifier que par la signature des Ministres respectifs. Cet expédient, tout en satisfaisant aux besoins du moment, ne préjugerait en rien la question de principe et de droit, et la laisserait provisoirement à l'écart en suspens.

"Ce n'est pas le caprice, l'orgueil, le désir de faire prévaloir à tout prix sa volonté qui font agir ainsi le Cabinet de Vienne, c'est une évidente nécessité. Les plaintes des

commerçants Austro-Hongrois deviennent de plus en plus pressantes. Après la terrible crise économique qui vient de traverser la monarchie, l'industrie et le commerce ont grandement besoin de coudées franches pour se relever. En attendant, le Gouvernement Roumain a promulgué une nouvelle loi douanière qui doit entrer en vigueur le 1 Janvier, 1875, et qui ne peut être que préjudiciable au commerce étranger. Enfin, déjà aux dernières Délégations, le Comte Andrassy a dû répondre à une interpellation par laquelle on lui demandait pourquoi les arrangements commerciaux projetés n'ont pas encore été conclus."

Dans un second article nous parlerons, d'après nos correspondances Viennoises, des suites qu'a eues la démarche du Cabinet de Vienne, des incidents diplomatiques auxquels a donné lieu sa négociation avec la Porte, et de l'issue probable de cette affaire.

L'exposé de notre correspondant de Vienne, publié par nous il y a trois jours, nous a fait connaître les motifs qui ont déterminé l'Autriche à vouloir régler ses rapports commerciaux avec les Principautés Danubiennes par un accord direct avec les Gouvernements Princiers. Nous avons vu que, pour parer aux difficultés légales inhérentes à ce projet, pour mettre fin aux doutes, aux incertitudes, aux interprétations contradictoires des Traités, le Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois a résolu de s'adresser à la Porte, et de lui demander d'accorder à la Roumanie et à la Serbie l'autorisation de conclure avec les Etats étrangers des arrangements commerciaux sans caractère politique. Cette manière de procéder était, il faut le reconnaître, irréprochable: le Cabinet de Vienne manifestait ainsi son respect pour les prérogatives de la Porte et reconnaissait pleinement ses droits suzerains sur les Principautés. Nous présentons aujourd'hui, d'après nos correspondances Viennoises, les suites qu'a eues cette démarche de l'Autriche:—

"En accordant d'emblée l'autorisation demandée," nous écrit-on, "la Porte aurait assurément agi de la manière la plus prudente, la plus habile, et la plus conforme à sa dignité. Elle ne pouvait pas nier l'existence des graves inconvénients qui ont motivé la démarche du Cabinet de Vienne. N'ayant aucun pouvoir réel dans les Principautés, elle était hors d'état d'y remédier par sa propre action. Elle n'avait aucun intérêt matériel engagé dans cette affaire et on ne lui demandait en réalité aucun sacrifice; car le droit de contracter en matière de commerce qu'on la sollicitait d'abandonner aux Principautés, elle était incapable de l'exercer efficacement elle-même par rapport à ces provinces. Son prestige moral était seul impliqué dans la question; il ne s'agissait pour elle que de sauvegarder le principe, de maintenir et d'affirmer ses droits et ses titres, de conserver intacte cette espèce de pouvoir spirituel et honorifique qu'elle possède encore à l'égard des Principautés vassales. L'autorisation remplissait parfaitement cet objet. En l'accordant de bonne grâce, la Porte sauvegardait le principe et affirmait hautement, ses droits de suzeraineté. Ce moyen commode lui permettait de légaliser et de sanctionner de son autorité ce qui était devenu inévitable, ce qu'elle n'était pas en mesure d'empêcher, et ce qui, en définitive, pouvait se faire sans elle, quoique dans des formes moins solennelles.

"La Porte n'a pas cru devoir prendre ce parti franchement et sans détour. Elle s'est déclarée prête à concéder aux Principautés le droit désiré, mais à la condition que les Gouvernements Princiers eux-mêmes lui en fissent préalablement la demande. Le Cabinet de Vienne n'avait rien à objecter à cette condition au point de vue du droit strict; mais, au point de vue de la politique pratique, il n'a pu que la trouver impossible à réaliser, et il a dû décliner de se charger de la mission d'amener les Gouvernements Princiers à cette démarche. On sait quels rêves de grandeur occupent les esprits à Bucarest et à Belgrade. Les partis avancés, la presse, toute la jeune génération y entretiennent les idées d'un Royaume Daco-Roumain et d'un Empire grand-Serbe. Comme toutes les nationalités que l'on appelle "jeunes," les Roumains et les Serbes aiment surtout l'apparence, l'éclat, la phrase, les démonstrations. Ils ne savent pas apprécier les avantages réels de leur situation actuelle, qui, avec l'autonomie la plus large, leur procure une complète sécurité, la paix et la neutralité sous la garantie de toute l'Europe; ils aiment mieux courir après une indépendance trompeuse, sans songer qu'en dehors des conditions actuelles leur existence ne peut être que fort précaire, et qu'ils risquent de devenir un objet de compensation entre les Grandes Puissances. Ce n'est pas dans le but de satisfaire à des besoins pratiques et d'obtenir des avantages matériels qu'ils désirent conclure des Conventions Commerciales, c'est pour les exploiter politiquement, pour faire une démonstration d'indépendance. Et ce

droit de traiter directement avec les Etats étrangers que l'on veut leur obtenir pour un cas spécial, les Roumains prétendent le posséder en entier depuis un temps immémorial. Se fondant sur des privilèges et des immunités concédés par les Sultans du seizième et du dix-septième siècle, ils se croient autorisés à négocier non seulement les Traités de Commerce, mais les Traités Politiques de toute nature. Par quel moyen pourrait-on les amener à demander à la Porte la permission de faire ce qu'ils affectent de considérer comme leur droit incontestable? Si le Ministère Roumain actuel, qui, après des années, est le premier Ministère modéré et raisonnable à Bucarest, osait proposer une telle démarche, il serait immédiatement renversé; les rouges reviendraient au pouvoir, la position du Prince Charles lui-même pourrait être compromise, et le pays deviendrait le théâtre de troubles que la Porte la première a le plus grand intérêt à ne pas provoquer. Il faut ajouter que, de toutes les Puissances, l'Autriche est la moins propre à agir à Bucarest et à Belgrade dans le sens désiré par la Porte. Elle a toujours été très impopulaire dans les Principautés; depuis fort peu de temps seulement on y commence à la regarder de meilleur œil. Si elle voulait exercer une pression sur les Gouvernements Princiers pour leur persuader de s'adresser préalablement à Constantinople, son impopularité revivrait à l'instant et ses efforts se trouveraient frappés d'avance de l'insuccès le plus complet. La Porte n'ignorait certes pas tout cela quand elle posait sa condition; aussi l'Autriche n'a-t-elle pu y voir qu'un refus déguisé."

Nous avons vu que le Cabinet de Vienne avait fait connaître son projet à toutes les Puissances signataires du Traité de Paris et qu'il avait demandé leur avis. La Russie s'est déclarée complétement d'accord avec les vues de l'Autriche et a promis de les appuyer de toute son influence à Constantinople. L'Allemagne a également offert avec un grand empressement son adhésion et son concours. Le Cabinet de Berlin a même montré, à ce qu'il paraît, dans cette affaire, une ardeur particulière et hors de proportion avec l'intérêt fort éloigné, secondaire et indirect qu'il pouvait y avoir. Il a poussé son zèle jusqu'à vouloir prendre en main l'initiative d'une action commune des trois Puissances du Nord. Comme il est notoire que le Cabinet de Berlin ne se propose pas, au moins pour le moment, de conclure des Conventions Commerciales avec les Principautés, il est permis de supposer qu'en agissant ainsi il avait autre chose en vue. Habitué depuis longtemps à se servir des affaires Orientales pour d'autres buts de sa politique, il a probablement voulu, par une action commune en Turquie, manifester à la face du monde cette entente générale entre les trois Empires du Nord, que l'on présentait déjà, assurément à tort, comme ébranlée à l'occasion de la reconnaissance du Gouvernement Espagnol.

La France a montré au commencement une certaine réserve, d'ailleurs naturelle dans sa situation présente. Cependant nos correspondants Viennois affirment que le Gouvernement Français, tout en différant d'avis avec le Cabinet de Vienne sur l'interprétation des Traités, a pleinement approuvé son idée de demander l'autorisation du Sultan, et que, dans la suite, il s'est déclaré prêt à favoriser toute combinaison qui, en ménageant les susceptibilités de la Porte, rendrait possible la conclusion des arrangements commerciaux séparés avec les Principautés, car alors il pourrait user à son tour de cette faculté dans l'intérêt du commerce Français. D'après les mêmes correspondances, l'Angleterre se montrerait, au contraire, peu favorable à la politique du Cabinet de Vienne, et se rangerait du côté de la Turquie. Nos correspondants attribuent principalement la résistance de la Porte aux conseils de Lord Elliot, Ambassadeur Britannique à Constantinople, et insinuent à ce propos que cette attitude de l'Angleterre est, peut-être, moins influencée par les principes que par ses intérêts commerciaux, le tarif Turc lui convenant mieux que le tarif Roumain. Cependant, d'autres renseignements présentent Lord Derby comme très modéré dans cette affaire, et comme se rapprochant plutôt des vues de la France. Quant à l'Italie, elle ne semble pas avoir encore caractérisé nettement son attitude.

"La Russie et l'Allemagne," continue notre correspondant, "s'étant approprié les vues et les projets de l'Autriche, il en est résulté entre les trois Cours du Nord une entente pour une action collective à Constantinople. Elles ont décidé de communiquer à la Porte leurs intentions dans une forme identique, en abandonnant à leurs Ambassadeurs en Turquie le choix du moment opportun. La nouvelle suivant laquelle les Ambassadeurs d'Autriche, de Russie, et d'Allemagne auraient remis à la Porte, le 22 Octobre, des notes identiques de leurs Gouvernements n'est pas diplomatiquement exacte. On n'a pas cru devoir recourir à une démarche aussi solennelle. La remise par les Ambassadeurs en personne des notes identiques de leurs Gouvernements aurait eu l'air d'une pression très forte, presque d'une menace, ce qui ne répondait nullement ni à la pensée des trois Puissances ni à la situation. On a choisi une forme beaucoup plus modeste. Les trois Ambassadeurs ont donné à leurs Drogmans une instruction identique, les chargeant de la faire connaître au Grand Vizir et au Ministre des Affaires Etrangères."

A en juger d'après l'analyse de cette instruction, que nous donnent nos correspondants, ce document fort court semble avoir un ton un peu sec, mais il ne contient rien de comminatoire, et est au fond passablement anodin.

"Les trois Puissances déclarent qu'elles ne veulent aucunement affaiblir les liens qui unissent les Principautés vassales à la Cour Suzeraine, ni porter le moindre atteinte aux droits et prérogatives de la Porte, mais que la position géographique et les institutions particulières des Principautés ne permettent pas de les assimiler aux autres provinces de l'Empire Ottoman. Elles ont des privilèges spéciaux et une autonomie intérieure complète, ce qui entraîne des relations de douanes et de commerce avec les Etats étrangers. Suit une brève exposition des nécessités économiques, déjà suffisamment connues, qui rendent indispensable le règlement des intérêts commerciaux par une négociation directe avec les Gouvernements Princiers. Les trois Puissances ne veulent pas entrer en controverse sur le point de droit, mais elles ne peuvent pas faire péricliter plus longtemps des intérêts positifs pour une question de forme. Par conséquent, les Drogmans sont chargés de prévenir le Grand Vizir et le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères que les trois Puissances se croient en droit de conclure avec les Principautés des arrangements directs et spéciaux concernant les douanes, les tarifs, et le commerce. Ils doivent assurer que ces arrangements seront dénués de tout caractère politique; on ne les fera signer que par les Ministères et les Administrations compétentes respectives, et ils ne seront pas revêtus de la sanction souveraine; ainsi, ils n'affaibliront aucun droit de la Porte et ne modifieront en rien sa position garantie par les Traités."

On voit que les trois Puissances, évitant la solution en principe, se contentent d'adopter en commun l'expédient que le Cabinet de Vienne s'était réservé, dès le début, pour le cas d'un refus de la Porte. Par cet expédient elles veulent satisfaire au besoin du moment, sans toucher au principe, sans préjuger la question de droit, et elles croient laisser ainsi intacte et hors de cause la position suzeraine de la Porte. Cette dernière n'a pas tardé de répondre à la communication du 22 Octobre. Dès le lendemain, le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, Aarifi Pacha, adressait une note aux Représentants Ottomans à Vienne, à St. Pétersbourg, et à Berlin, et, quelques jours plus tard, ce document paraissait déjà dans la "Nouvelle Presse Libre." Nous l'avons publié en traduction dans notre numéro du 10 Novembre. La note Turque a produit assez généralement en France l'effet d'une protestation. La prompte publicité que lui a donnée la Porte, et qui semblait signifier un appel à l'opinion publique, puis sa communication officielle à Paris et à Londres, ont contribué à créer cette impression. Ajoutons qu'en faisant divulguer sa réponse, la Porte n'a pas livré à la publicité l'instruction identique des trois Puissances qui l'avait motivée, et qu'ainsi la teneur de cette instruction restait inconnue. Il paraît qu'à Vienne l'impression a été différente.

"La note Turque," dit un de nos correspondants, "n'est écrite que pour sauver les apparences; mais, au fond, il est évident que la Porte se résigne à l'inévitable. Elle reconnaît pleinement la valeur des intérêts qui ont motivé la politique des trois Puissances, ainsi que la nécessité où elles se trouvent de prendre une décision pratique et immédiate. Elle fait bien encore des réserves, exprime des regrets, se répand en plaintes, mais elle ne va pas jusqu'à faire appel à toutes les Puissances garantes pour provoquer une interprétation Européenne des Traités. Revenant sur la condition qu'elle avait posée—la demande préalable des Gouvernements Princiers à Constantinople—elle la recommande de nouveau comme le meilleur moyen de solution; mais elle n'y insiste que faiblement, comme par acquit de conscience, sans espoir de succès et sans se faire l'illusion que cela puisse arrêter l'action des Puissances. Elle se plaint d'une atteinte portée au Traité de Paris, mais vaguement, sans rien préciser, et elle n'entreprend pas de fournir la preuve que ce Traité interdit expressément les arrangements commerciaux directs sans caractère politique avec les Principautés. Le ton de résignation fataliste que respire la note Turque lui donne un cachet vraiment Oriental. Une nuance de mélancolie est répandue dans ce document; on y voit comme un pressentiment des malheurs à venir. Se contentant de justifier la position qu'elle avait prise, la Porte rejette sur les trois Cours la responsabilité pour les conséquences que peut entraîner la politique qu'elles ont adoptés."

Nos correspondants considèrent le débat comme virtuellement terminé. Les trois Puissances vont, paraît-il, répondre encore à la note Turque, et dans cette réponse, à ce qu'on nous affirme, elles s'attacheront surtout à rassurer la Porte, à calmer ses appréhensions; elles se porteront, pour ainsi dire, garantes que sa position suzeraine restera intacte et prendront l'engagement de ne pas permettre que les arrangements commerciaux à intervenir soient exploités dans les Principautés au point de vue politique et

dans un sens contraire aux droits et aux prérogatives de la Porte. Mais cette correspondance n'arrêtera plus l'action décidée; le Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois prépare déjà les bases de sa négociation avec la Roumanie.

No. 119.

Sir H. Elliot the Earl of Derby.—(*Received November* 24.)

(No. 283.)
My Lord, *Therapia, November* 10, 1874.

COUNT ZICHY yesterday spoke to me of the Convention or arrangement which his Government proposed to make with the Servian Government, and read to me a clause in it referring to the Tariff, by which the maximum duty on imports into the Principality was to be limited to 7½ per cent.

He said he was particularly glad to show me this clause, as I had always said that provided the Tariff was not in contravention with the Turkish Treaties, which fixed 8 per cent. as a maximum, the Porte would probably not object to the arrangement.

I said I continued to be of the same opinion, and I thought that if the Austrian Government had simply intimated a wish to combine with the Governments of the Principalities in making a Tariff which should not clash with the terms of the Treaty, it would in all probability have been assented to; but in their communication to the Porte they had imposed no such limitation on themselves, and the collective action of the three Powers had now given the proceedings a political character which made the question more difficult to deal with.

Count Zichy was unable to answer my inquiry whether the same maximum of duty was to be maintained in the arrangement with the Roumanian Government.

I mentioned to my colleague that the Russian Ambassador had assured me, as he was understood to have assured the Porte, that it was only his exertions which had prevented the collective representation from being couched in much stronger terms; and Count Zichy having exclaimed, "But is it possible that anyone will believe this?" I said, that seeing the eagerness with which his Government had pressed the question forward, while Russia remained prudently in the background, I thought it likely to be very generally believed, and a corresponding distrust of Austria created.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 120.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 234. Most Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 26, 1874.

THE Turkish Ambassador at this Court called here on the 23rd instant, and, in the course of conversation, communicated to me most confidentially the substance of a telegram dated the 21st instant, which his Excellency had received from the Imperial Minister for Foreign Affairs at Constantinople, and which was to the following effect:—

Prince Bismarck had privately and confidentially advised that a Firman should be addressed to Prince Charles, in which, moved by his paternal solicitude for the welfare of the countries confided to his faithful and beloved vassal, and his desire to facilitate the commercial relations of Austria, especially with the Principalities, the Sultan should authorize spontaneously ("d'autorité") the conclusion of the proposed arrangements.

On the other hand, the Ottoman Government had learnt that Hungary refused to agree to these arrangements, but they were not aware whether, in presence of this dissension, Prince Bismarck adhered to his advice.

The opinion of Musurus Pasha was asked as to the proposed combination, and as to what the Porte could hope from the British Government.

The Cabinet of St. Petersburgh advised the Porte not to make useless appeals to the Powers who had not joined in the identic representation, and whom they seemed to include in a general feeling of contempt.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 121.

*Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.**—(*Received November* 28.)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, November* 28, 1874.

AARIFI PACHA has read me a despatch from the Turkish Ambassador at Berlin, reporting a suggestion of Prince Bismarck that the Sultan should issue a Firman authorizing the Roumanian Government to conclude Commercial Conventions.

He promises that Germany will give Prince Charles no further support if he is not satisfied with this.

I afterwards saw the Grand Vizier, and said that there was much to be urged in favour of suggestion, and his Highness finally said that his confidence in Her Majesty's Government was so entire, that if they considered that there was no other solution of the question, and that the Porte might properly agree to this, he would be willing to do so.

In that case he would wish Her Majesty's Government to come to an understanding with the Cabinet of Berlin, and to take the initiative in recommending the Porte the course which they think most expedient.

The Prince's language to the Turkish Ambassador was far from complimentary to the Russian and Austrian Governments, and the Grand Vizier seems to think he can fairly trust the interests and rights of the Porte to the British and German Governments.

No. 122.

*The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.**

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, November* 29, 1874, *midnight.*

IN reply to your telegram of yesterday, I have to state to you that instructions were sent to you on the 20th instant, advising the Porte to acquiesce in the Principalities concluding Commercial Treaties as an initiatory part of the coming revision of the Turkish Commercial Treaties.

This will be sufficient for the Porte to act upon if it is inclined to adopt the advice of Prince Bismarck.

No. 123.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 255. Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, November* 29, 1874.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 28th ultimo, respecting a suggestion of Prince Bismarck that the Sultan should issue a Firman authorizing the Government of the Principalities to conclude Commercial Conventions, and conveying the wish of the Porte that Her Majesty's Government should consult with the German Government, so as to take the initiative in recommending to the Porte the course which they think most expedient, I have to refer you to the instructions contained in my despatch No. 222 of the 20th ultimo, requesting your Excellency to advise the Porte to acquiesce in the proposal that the Principalities should be allowed to conclude Commercial Treaties, as an initiatory part of the coming revision of the Turkish Commercial Treaties.

Her Majesty's Government consider that this will be sufficient for the Porte to act upon if it is inclined to adopt the advice of Prince Bismarck.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

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* Sent to Lord A. Loftus, Lord Odo Russell, Lord Lytton, Sir A. Buchanan, and Sir A. Paget.

No. 124.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received November 30.)

(No. 307.)
My Lord, *Berlin, November 28, 1874.*

IN obedience to your Lordship's instruction No. 241 of the 23rd instant, I called to-day on Herr von Bülow, and communicated to his Excellency your Lordship's despatch No. 222 of the same date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, giving the views of Her Majesty's Government upon the question of the right of the Principalities to conclude Commercial Conventions without obtaining the sanction of the Porte.

His Excellency, in thanking me for your Lordship's communication, said he would submit it to the Prince Chancellor as soon as possible.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 125.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)*

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.) *Berlin, November 30, 1874, 4 P.M.*

BULOW admits the correctness of Sir H. Elliot's information, and confirms the advice given by Prince Bismarck to the Turkish Ambassador, but begs it may be kept secret.

He would be very glad if your Lordship could back up this secret advice at Constantinople, through Sir H. Elliot.

No. 126.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)*

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.) *Berlin, November 30, 1874.*

BULOW called to night to say that Prince Bismarck, alarmed at the indiscretion of the Porte, and the offence his secret advice might give to his allies, had telegraphed to Vienna and St. Petersburgh to ask whether they would agree to the issue of a Firman authorising Roumania to conclude Commercial Treaties. He begs for secrecy.

No. 127.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 1.)

(No. 294.)
My Lord, *Therapia, November 14, 1874.*

AARIFI Pasha's language, at a conversation that I had with him this morning, was of a nature to make me feel tolerable confidence that if the proposed commercial arrangements between Austria and the Principalities do not provide for duties in excess of the 8 per cent. fixed as the basis in the Turkish Treaties of Commerce with the Foreign Powers, it is not likely that any serious objection to them will be raised by the Porte.

I mentioned to his Excellency that I had learnt from the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador that in the draft of the arrangement with Servia, 7½ per cent. was proposed as the maximum rate of duty, and if it were to be stated that in the arrangements with the Roumanian Principalities, not having the form of Conventions, the same limitation will be introduced, there would, I believe, be a fair probability of the difficulties with the Porte being got over.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

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* Sent to Sir H. Elliot, Lord A. Loftus, Sir A. Buchanan, Sir A. Paget, and Lord Lytton.

No. 128.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 312. Secret.)
My Lord, *Berlin, November 30, 1874.*

ON receiving your Lordship's telegram this morning from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, respecting the secret suggestion of Prince Bismarck to the Turkish Ambassador, that the Sultan should issue a Firman authorising the Government of Roumania to conclude Commercial Conventions, I called on Herr von Bülow and asked him confidentially whether the Turkish Government had been correctly informed by their Ambassador at Berlin?

After a moment's hesitation his Excellency admitted the fact, but qualified it by explaining that Prince Bismarck had in a friendly and private conversation yielded to the pressing solicitations of the Turkish Ambassador for advice by saying that as German Chancellor he had none to give, but if he were the Grand Vizier he would cut the matter short by simply issuing an Imperial Firman, authorising the Vassal Princes, in the name of their Suzerain, to conclude Commercial Conventions, and he only wondered the Porte had not hit upon so simple and so practical a solution to their imaginary difficulty long ago.

Herr von Bülow concluded by saying that the suggestion was really so good that he would be very glad if your Lordship saw no objection to backing it up privately at Constantinople, through Sir H. Elliot, but he begged the incident might be kept out of blue books and public despatches.

I said I thought there was much to be urged in favour of the suggestion, and left him to go and telegraph without loss of time to your Lordship.

Late at night, after dinner, Herr von Bülow called at the Embassy and sent in to say he came on business. After a few preliminaries His Excellency explained that Prince Bismarck, to whom he had reported what passed between us in the afternoon, had sent him to me to beg for the strictest secrecy, the indiscretion of the Turkish Ministers in not taking his friendly and secret hint as it was meant, and fixing the paternity of it on him, had alarmed him because it might give offence to his allies, to whom he had, for obvious reasons, not mentioned it at the time. He did not wish to act behind their backs as matters now stood, and so to save appearances, he had at once telegraphed to Vienna and St. Petersburgh to ask whether Count Andrassy and Prince Gortchakow would agree to the issue of a Firman authorising the Roumanian Government to conclude Commercial Conventions as a means of giving full satisfaction to the Suzerain Power as well as to all parties concerned.

I said that I would communicate Prince Bismarck's wishes to your Lordship, and would keep them to myself in Berlin, that as far as I knew your Lordship had been favourably impressed by Prince Bismarck's suggestion to the Turkish Government as reported by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, which generally agreed with the spirit of your Lordship's despatch to Sir H. Elliot (No. 222 of the 23rd instant) which I had communicated to his Excellency Herr von Bülow by your Lordship's orders on the 28th instant, and that I could not imagine Count Andrassy and Prince Gortchakow would raise any objection to the Porte adopting a course which was a mere re-assertion of the Suzerain rights of the Sultan over his Vassals confirmed by Treaty.

After a few friendly assertions of Prince Bismark's desire to act in harmony with your Lordship at all times, Herr von Bülow took his leave.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 129.

Lord Lytton to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 2.)

(No. 1,148.)
My Lord, *Paris, December 1, 1874.*

OWING to the absence of the Duc Decazes, who does not return from Versailles till this evening, I have been unable to see his Excellency since the receipt of your Lordship's last telegram to me on the subject of the Roumanian Treaties and the Greek Loan; but I have informed his Excellency, by a private letter which will be given to him immediately on his return to Paris this evening, that Her Majesty's

Government consider the advice previously given by them to the Porte to acquiesce in the conclusion of Commercial Treaties by the Principalities as a preliminary to the revision of the Turkish Commercial Treaties, will be sufficient for the Porte to act upon, if it is inclined to adopt the suggestion now made to it by Prince Bismarck; and that Sir Henry Elliot has been instructed to that effect.

I have also, by the same means, informed the Duke that, as regards the new Greek Loan, Mr. Stuart has been authorized by your Lordship to agree to an identic note reserving all existing rights.

The telegram recording your Lordship's reply to Sir Henry Elliot of the 20th ultimo, was not perfectly decypherable when it reached me; but its general purport was sufficiently clear to enable me to act upon it, as above reported.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYTTON.

No. 129*.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 2.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, December 2, 1874.*

I COMMUNICATED to Count Andrassy yesterday at Pesth your despatch No. 222 to Sir H. Elliot. He said that transit question did not affect Austria, and the Porte could not terminate her Treaty of Commerce for fourteen years; that Austrian Ambassador at Constantinople had telegraphed that the Porte wished the question to be treated by a Conference of the guaranteeing Powers, which his Excellency considers will be unwise with a view to the dignity and interests of the Sovereign. He appeared to have no objection to the Sultan granting right by Firman to the Principalities to make Commercial Conventions with all Powers, but said that the three Governments could not ask for what they had assumed Roumania already possessed.

I said that I believed Prince Bismarck considered that the issue of such a Firman would be the best settlement of the question, but I was very cautious, and said nothing inconsistent with His Highness' wish for secrecy expressed in telegrams from your Lordship received here to-day.

No. 130.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Foreign Office, December 2, 1874, 5 P.M.*

WITH reference to request of the German Government that Her Majesty's Government would support proposal of Prince Bismarck for the issue by the Porte of a Firman, authorizing conclusion of Commercial Treaties by the Principalities, I have to state that Her Majesty's Government have already, in my despatch to you of the 20th ultimo, and on previous occasions, strongly recommended the Porte to acquiesce in the conclusion of these Treaties. They do not desire to advise any particular form of acquiescence, which had better be left to the Porte, but see no objection to the issue of a Firman as proposed.

No. 131.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 2.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rome, December 2, 1874.*

I MENTIONED to M. Visconti Venosta yesterday the nature of Prince Bismarck's suggestion to the Turkish Government, and of your instructions to Sir H. Elliot thereupon. In consequence of your Lordship's telegram received last evening I have seen his Excellency again this morning. He assured me that he has not mentioned to anyone what I told him yesterday, and promises not to do so.

I find he had himself an idea similar to Prince Bismarck; but did not put it forward owing to his conviction gained in conversation with Roumanian Agent here that

if the Firman was issued the Roumanian Government would not take any notice of it. He had also thought of suggesting as a minimum that the Porte should acquiesce in conclusion of Commercial Conventions between the three Powers and the Principalities, provided the former would communicate them officially when signed to the Sultan's Government as Suzerain; but, before saying anything at Constantinople, he thought it desirable to ascertain whether such a plan had a chance of acceptance at Vienna. He accordingly imparted his idea to the Austrian Minister here, who promised to consult his Government, but has not yet given any answer.

M. Visconti Venosta will in any case now await result of Prince Bismarck's proposal.

No. 132.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(No. 708.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, December 4, 1874.*

I APPROVE of Lord Lytton having communicated to the Duc Decazes, as reported in his Lordship's despatch No. 1148 of the 1st instant, the views of Her Majesty's Government on the subject of the conclusion of Commercial Treaties by the Principalities and the new Greek Loan.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 133.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 5, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *St. Petersburgh, December 5, 1874.*

I HAVE spoken to M. de Westmann without any reference to Prince Bismarck on issue of a Firman. He considered that the Porte would thus act judiciously although tardily. Imperial Government can give no advice, the question itself being regarded by them as closed by their declaration to the Porte.

Would it not be wise for the Porte to profit of this opportunity to regulate and settle once for all by a Conference of the Powers, signatories of the Treaty of Paris, the relations between Suzerain Power and the Principalities? For instance, the questions of Consular jurisdiction, right of coinage, of granting decorations, and of sending and receiving Consular Agents. These questions will inevitably arise. The spontaneous settlement by the Porte will attach the Principalities to her, and will relieve her and Europe from constant recurring agitation: her failure to do so will keep up existing irritation to end finally in her discomfiture.

No. 134.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 5, at night.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, December 5, 1874.*

NOTHING known here of any inquiry being made by the Austrian Minister in Italy as to opinion of the Austrian Government respecting the best way of reconciling the interests of the Porte with the conclusion of the Commercial Conventions by Roumania.

As Count Andrassy, who had been expected here, now intends to remain at Pesth, I think of going there to-morrow.

No. 135.

The Earl of Derby to Sir. H. Elliot.

(No. 258.)

Foreign Office, December 5, 1874.

Sir,

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me this day and communicated to me the substance of a telegraphic despatch from Constantinople, dated the 3rd instant, to the following effect:—

The Turkish Government had not yet received the copy of the instructions sent to your Excellency respecting the Roumanian Commercial Treaty question, and were anxious to know what steps Her Majesty's Government had taken in communicating with other Powers, as they feared that, at any moment, they might find themselves "in presence of an accomplished fact." They accordingly asked the Turkish Ambassador to telegraph how the matter stood, and to ascertain what the feeling of the English Government and of the other Powers would be if a proposal were made for summoning a Conference having for its sole object to decide the question whether the Principalities should be allowed to conclude Commercial Treaties or not.

The Turkish Ambassador, in explanation of this communication, told me that, in the opinion of his Government, the advice given by Prince Bismarck that a Firman should be issued conceding to the Principalities the right which they claimed of making Commercial Treaties on their own account, was inapplicable to the present circumstances. No confidence could be felt by the Porte that the Firman would be treated with respect if it were issued. The Roumanian Government might, indeed, prefer to ignore it altogether. This was a result to which the Turkish Government did not choose to expose themselves.

The Turkish Government, his Excellency added, did not object in principle to issue a Firman, but it would be necessary to define in it more clearly than had been done as yet the limit of the privileges which it might concede and its issue ought to be the consequence of an application of the Powers to the Porte.

I pointed out to his Excellency, in reply, that it could not be expected that Austria, Germany, and Russia, after the representations they had addressed to the Porte, should make such an application, which would be in effect asking as a favour for that which they had publicly claimed as a right, and they had already intimated as much. As for Her Majesty's Government, all that we desired was to see the question satisfactorily adjusted, and we were indifferent as to the particular form of settlement which might be preferred. The objection to a Conference was not taken by us; but I felt convinced that the proposition would not be accepted by the other Powers interested.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 136.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 6.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.)

Therapia, December 5, 1874.

YOUR despatch No. 222 was communicated to Minister for Foreign Affairs on Thursday morning, and your telegram of 2nd was communicated yesterday.

I have to-day seen both his Excellency and the Grand Vizier. The former inclines to issue of Firman, but the Grand Vizier is more disposed to hold out against all concessions.

He knows that refusal of Porte to sanction conclusion of Convention will not deter Austrian Government from making them, in which case the Porte must, of course, submit, and his impression was that this might be better than a voluntary abdication of the Sultan's rights; but this was only an impression, and not a decision.

The Russian Ambassador had just seen Grand Vizier, and had told him that the Principalities insisted on their right to making formal Treaties, and that nothing short of it would satisfy them.

This had evidently added to his disinclination to make concessions, for he seems to attach an exaggerated importance to the distinction between Treaties and Conventions.

No. 137.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 7.)

(No. 340.)

Vienna, December 2, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAD an interview yesterday with Count Andrassy at Buda Pesth, at which I read to his Excellency your Lordship's despatch to Sir H. Elliott, No. 222 of the 20th ultimo, relative to the right of the Danubian Principalities to contract Commercial Conventions with Foreign States, and I left a copy of it with his Excellency. It appeared to me that he was not well acquainted with the "Règlement Organique" of the Principality of Moldavia of July, 1829, subsequently confirmed by Treaty between the Guaranteeing Powers of 1858, which Acts, taken together with the XXth Article of the Treaty of Commerce between Great Britain and Turkey of 1860, render it impossible for Her Majesty's Government to admit the existence of the right claimed by the Principalities, although they are willing to allow that there may be some foundation for the reasons recently stated at Constantinople by Austria, Germany, and Russia, to show the expediency of the Principalities exercising it. He could not, he said, concur in the suggestion of Her Majesty's Government that the question should be treated as having arisen out of the notice given by the Porte for the revision of her Commercial Treaties with Foreign States, and be treated as a whole, through the medium of the Guaranteeing Powers, in connection with the commercial relations of Turkey with the Principalities, and their transit trade through Turkish territory, because, in the first place, the Porte cannot terminate the Austrian Commercial Treaty or demand its revision, as it has still fourteen years to run: and secondly, because Austria has no transit trade with the Principalities through Turkish territory. His Excellency said that he was sorry to learn from Count Zichy that the Porte thought of proposing a Conference of the Guaranteeing Powers for the arrangement of the question, as he considered such a measure would be a third and worse fault, added to those which, in his opinion, she had already committed, first, in not accepting his original suggestion to confer spontaneously on the Principalities a right to conclude Commercial Conventions; and secondly, in not availing herself of the recent declarations of the three Powers; and intimating that, if informal agreements were all they proposed to contract with the vassal States, there could be no objection to transactions which served to show that these States had no right to claim the privileges of independent sovereignties. These were, he said, errors on the part of the Porte; and to convoke a Conference of the Guaranteeing Powers, of whom three had already pronounced, to a certain extent, an opinion in favour of the rights claimed by the Principalities, would be a more serious one, as such a Conference would doubtless result in these rights being granted, and what might previously have been looked upon as an act of grace on the part of the Sultan, would then appear to all the Christian populations of the Empire to have been imposed upon His Majesty by the Guaranteeing Powers.

I said that his Excellency seemed to overlook that your Lordship's advice to the Porte was not only intended to protect the rights and the Suzerainty of the Sultan, but also to promote the interests of the Principalities themselves, by ensuring to them the continuance of their transit trade, and the advantageous commercial relations with Turkey which they now enjoy; but he answered that as the three Powers had already made a declaration from which they could not recede, the logical mode of procedure now would be for the other Powers to follow their example, or if precluded by their engagements with the Porte, or their interpretation of the Treaty of Paris, from doing so without the sanction of the Sultan, to obtain His Majesty's sanction; and, after they had made commercial arrangements with the Principalities, they could treat with the Porte, in concert with the Roumanian Government, for a continuance of the transit trade. I said I hoped his Excellency, at all events, appreciated the friendly advice which your Lordship had offered to the Porte since the question was first mooted by Austria, and your present wish to promote its settlement in a manner which would be at once satisfactory to the Porte, and to the Government of Austria-Hungary and the Powers acting with it; and as I had received your Excellency's telegram of the 29th ultimo before my interview with his Excellency, I said that I believed that Prince Bismarck would not be unfavourable to some general action by Firman on the part of the Sultan; and as he inquired whether Prince Bismarck had taken any steps to promote an arrangement, I answered, that it had merely appeared to me, from correspondence which had reached me, that his Highness

considered that some act of Suzerainty on the part of the Sultan would be expedient, as the best means of reconciling the conflicting views of the Guaranteeing Powers, and of giving His Majesty's sanction to the opinions expressed upon it by the Governments of Austria, Germany, and Russia.

I regret that your Lordship's telegrams of the 1st instant were not received by me until my arrival here from Buda-Pesth this morning.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 138.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 7.)

(No. 354.)
My Lord, *Vienna, December 3, 1874.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that, after receiving this morning your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, I called on Baron Hofmann, and offered to show him a copy of your Lordship's despatch to Sir H. Elliot, No. 222, in case it had not been forwarded from Pesth from Count Andrassy.

His Excellency, after stating that he had already received it, and that it had been translated for communication to the Emperor, expressed satisfaction at the wish which it evinced on the part of Her Majesty's Government to bring about a community of views amongst the Powers interested, and I availed myself of the opportunity to mention, in conformity with your telegram, that your Lordship had no desire to advise any particular form of acquiescence on the part of the Sultan as to the rights claimed by the Principalities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 139.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, December 8, 1874.*

COUNT BULOW has just called to say that Prince Gortchakow is delighted with, and Count Andrassy consents to Prince Bismarck's idea of Firman by Porte, authorising Roumania to conclude Commercial Conventions.

Count Münster has been instructed to communicate with your Lordship on the subject.

No. 140.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, December 8, 1874.*

I HAVE seen Count Andrassy who objects to Italian suggestion as inconvenient for the three Powers of the North, and says that it would also be uncourteous to the Sultan to ask him to ratify such Acts; he also thinks a Firman would be inexpedient, as Roumania would not acknowledge it, and that a note from the Porte to all the Powers would be preferable, stating that though Treaty of Paris did not in its opinion confer on the Vassal States the right to conclude Commercial Treaties, it has no objection to such arrangements as the three Powers had proposed.

No. 141.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 309. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, November 23, 1874.*

THE Grand Vizier in speaking to me of the Roumanian Treaty question, mentioned confidentially that there seemed not to be a perfect understanding about it among the three Powers.

Austria had endeavoured to attribute the initiative of the collective step to the German Government, which, according to Baron Werther, was not disposed to accept the responsibility thrown upon it.

His Highness also said that Prince Bismarck had made a suggestion to him, which he would tell me of in strict confidence.

It was proposed that the Sultan should issue a Firman conferring upon the Principalities the privilege of making the arrangement in question, and it was intimated that if Prince Charles was not satisfied with that mode of proceeding he would receive no further support from Berlin.

In reply to my inquiry the Grand Vizier said he did not propose to give any answer to what was in fact a mere suggestion, but he was desirous of knowing what I thought of it. I said that, as His Highness was aware, when the question first arose, I had been of opinion that the Porte might very well concede what was wished by the Austrian Government upon a matter said to be of much importance to their commercial interests, but that in the present position of things I could not take upon myself to recommend the adoption of the suggestion.

If the proposal was such as the Grand Vizier explained, it may strike your Lordship as being rather at variance with the views of the German Government as conveyed in the identic communication, where what is now recommended to be ceded to the Principalities as a new privilege was treated as an already existing right.

The encouragement latterly given to the Principalities has brought their pretensions to such a pitch that if the Sultan could be induced to give a Firman, such as that proposed, it is I think very doubtful how it would be received by Prince Charles' Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 142.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 8.)

(No. 314. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, November 25, 1874.*

THE last time I saw the Grand Vizier he intimated, as I reported in my despatch No. 309, that the three Powers did not seem to be quite on good understanding in regard to the question of the Roumanian Treaties, but his language was reserved and rather mysterious.

Certain information which I have now obtained from a most confidential source, and some remarks which fell from General Ignatiew in the course of a conversation which I had with him yesterday, have, I believe, afforded a clue to his Highness' allusion.

From the one side I learn that the Grand Vizier has been greatly irritated at finding that, while the Austrian Government was endeavouring to obtain the acquiescence of the Porte in their wish to make commercial arrangements with the Principalities, projects of regular Conventions with them were already being negotiated; and, on the other side, it appears that the Russian Ambassador claims the gratitude of the Porte for having discountenanced these extreme pretensions.

There is reason for believing that true to the policy which he has steadily followed for years of creating a distrust of Austria, General Ignatiew has intimated that political considerations obliged his Government to associate themselves to a certain extent with the Cabinet of Vienna, but that they have no desire to press the matter forward, and are especially anxious that nothing derogatory to the rights of the Sultan should be done.

I believe that in this instance the Russian Ambassador can claim with perfect truth the credit of having made the late collective communication less offensive to the Porte than it would otherwise have been; but, nevertheless, although the distrust of Austria, which has been caused by the late transaction, is profound, his Excellency has not succeeded in inspiring the Sultan's Government wth any greater confidence in himself or his Government than they before possessed.

More immediate resentment is entertained towards Austria on account of her having formerly been regarded as a supporter of the Empire than against Russia,

whose policy has long been known, and who is supposed now to have adroitly encouraged her to advance the Russian views.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 143.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 8.)

(No. 317. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, November* 27, 1874.

AT a conversation which I had with him this morning I found Count Zichy much disturbed by the tone adopted by the Grand Vizier when he spoke to him about the Roumanian Treaties a few days ago, and especially by a declaration of His Highness that he would be forced to submit the question to the judgment of a Conference of the guaranteeing Powers.

Count Zichy said that he was more inclined to look at this as having been said under feelings of irritation than as a serious intimation, but he had been obliged to communicate it to his Government.

I said that it would be undesirable for the Porte to take any precipitate decision under such feelings as he supposed to be dictating it; but I could assure him that the Grand Vizier's language to me had been far from unreasonable, and I felt confident that it was still within the power of the Austro-Hungarian Government to overcome the difficulty by declaring that, in their proposed arrangements, they had no intention of settling anything in a way to override the points established by the Treaties.

I mentioned also that the Grand Vizier was irritated at finding that negotiations had begun between his Government and the Principalities, and draft Conventions examined, before it was known whether the Porte would grant or withhold its consent to them.

Count Zichy replied that it was altogether a mistake to suppose that there had been any negotiations with the Principalities, but as almost immediately after he said, in reply to the other part of my remarks, that Servia had consented to 7½ per cent. as the basis of the new Customs arrangements, I remarked that if the two Governments had got to the length of coming to this understanding, it would be difficult to persuade the Porte that there had been no negotiations between them.

Count Zichy upon this occasion again urgently pressed me to induce the Porte to show less stiffness upon this question, insisting that I was now the only foreign Representative who possessed influence over them; their decision would depend greatly upon me.

I entirely disclaimed the responsibility and influence with which my colleague wished to credit me.

I said that it was no doubt true that the Porte listened more to advice given by the agent of a Government which was guided by the principle of respect for the Treaties, and the rights which seemed to be secured by them to the Porte, than by that which came from those who might be influenced by other considerations; but that my influence, such as it was, had been exerted to persuade the Porte to accede, as far as was possible without abandoning distinct rights, to meet the wishes of the Austro-Hungarian Government upon this question, and I should continue to speak in the same sense.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 144.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 9.)

(No. 319. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, November* 28, 1874.

THIS morning Aarifi Pasha read to me confidentially a despatch which he had received from the Turkish Ambassador at Berlin, reporting a conversation that he had had with Prince Bismarck, who had suggested that the Sultan should issue a Firman

authorizing the Roumanian Government to conclude Commercial Conventions with foreign Powers.

If Prince Charles should not be satisfied with this mode of proceeding, Prince Bismarck promised that he should receive no further support from Germany.

On leaving Aarifi Pasha I went to the Grand Vizier, and had a long conversation with him on the subject of this despatch, in the course of which I represented that there was much that might be urged in favour of the suggestion, and that it deserved at least to be taken into serious consideration.

If the suggestion were to be acted upon, coming as it did from the German Chancellor, it might be possible to make it the means of obtaining from the Powers a declaration that Prince Charles would not be justified or supported in the further pretentions which he may entertain, and the initiative now taken by Prince Bismarck would almost ensure his co-operation in obtaining it.

The Grand Vizier observed that, as things now are, the Treaties of the different Powers with Turkey are applicable to the Principalities, and that, as the Porte has no right to intimate to Prince Charles that he is released from his engagements to foreign Governments, the consent of the latter would, in his opinion, have first to be obtained.

I said that his view seemed correct, and it was precisely in submitting to the Cabinets the proposed new privilege to be accorded to the Principalities, and in asking their adherence to it that a form of words might be adopted showing that the Firman was understood as conferring a fresh faculty, and not as recognizing an existing right.

His Highness ultimately said that, although he would much prefer to refuse altogether what was now asked for, his confidence in Her Majesty's Government was so complete that if they considered that there was no other solution of the question, and that the Porte might agree to the suggestion without a dangerous sacrifice of its rights, he would be ready to follow their advice.

In that case, however, he would wish Her Majesty's Government to come to an understanding with the Cabinet of Berlin, and to take the initiative in recommending to the Porte the course which they think most expedient.

Prince Bismarck's language to the Turkish Ambassador was so little flattering towards the Austrian and Russian Governments that the Grand Vizier appears to think that he can safely trust the interests and rights of the Sultan to those of Great Britain and of Germany, and he has submitted himself to the leading of Her Majesty's Government in a manner to convey an unlimited confidence in the friendly disinterestedness of the advice which he hopes to receive.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 145.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 9.)

(No. 320. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, November* 28, 1874.

IN my preceding No. 319 I mentioned the despatch in which Aristarchi Bey reported his conversation with Prince Bismarck upon the Roumanian Treaties, but my object being to put your Lordship in possession of the views of the Grand Vizier and Aarifi Pasha on the question, and their manner of receiving the Prince's suggestion, I did not recapitulate the Ambassador's report of an interesting and curious conversation with the minuteness that it seems to deserve.

Aristarchi Bey opened the subject of the commercial arrangements by showing the position in which the question had stood previous to the identic action of the three Powers, and he insisted that Germany had gratuitously and without necessity come forward to the assistance of Austria in a matter in which she had herself no real interest, and had thus been the means of inflicting a serious injury on the Porte.

He nevertheless gave the Prince credit for having no hostile feelings towards the Sultan, and he appealed to the "loyauté" and "bienveillance" of the Emperor's Government to find means of putting an end to the painful state of affairs.

I regret that I cannot sufficiently trust to my memory for the exact terms in which the Prince in his reply spoke of the different Governments; but he alluded to Russia in a way to imply that he was perfectly aware of, but was not inclined to advance her views in the East; to France, in a manner that seemed like a con-

temptuous sneer at her present weakness; and to Austria with something of protecting pity.

The plan of identic action had, he said, come from Vienna; he had consented to adopt it, and that Cabinet was now too much committed to retract.

If he were, he added, now "to give Count Andrassy a lesson" for his precipitate proceedings, it would probably lead to his fall, for his position was already greatly compromised, and his late friendly attitude towards Germany made such a catastrophe undesirable.

The Chancellor then pointed out that different States of the German Empire and the Prussian Provinces were authorized to make unpolitical commercial arrangements without it affecting their position in it; and he saw no reason why the same liberty should not be allowed to the Principalities, without injury to the rights of the Sultan. But Aristarchi Bey observed that the States alluded to had kept their sovereign prerogatives, and that the Prussian Provinces could only act with the authorization of the Central Government.

Finally, Prince Bismarck, being again pressed by Aristarchi Bey, after strong protestations of his sympathies for Turkey, confidentially and in his own name advised that the Sultan, in the exercise of his authority, should address a Firman to his "faithful Vassal."

In this, taking for his point of departure his constant solicitude for the material prosperity of the population intrusted to Prince Charles' administration, and his desire to facilitate their commercial relations, especially those with Austria, His Majesty would authorize the conclusion of Commercial Conventions.

According to the opinion of Prince Bismarck, this mode of proceeding would confirm in the eyes of Europe the Sultan's rights of suzerainty, would leave unimpaired the Treaty of Paris, and would satisfy the Emperor Francis Joseph; and, on the expression of a doubt by Aristarchi Bey as to how such a Firman would be received by Prince Charles, his Highness declared that if it was not properly accepted, the Prince should receive no support from Germany.

Aristarchi Bey concluded his despatch by stating that the interview had left upon him the impression that Prince Bismarck was really animated by a disposition favourable to Turkey.

Such, my Lord, is, as nearly as I am able to convey it, the general tenor of a communication which has evidently produced a very strong impression upon the Sultan's Ministers, and has seemingly induced them, in spite of recent appearances, to look upon Germany as a probable protector against the encroachments of the two neighbouring Empires.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 146.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 9.)

(No. 321. Confidential.)
Therapia, November 29, 1874.

My Lord,

THE Grand Vizier spoke to me yesterday at some length upon the policy of Austria and Russia towards Turkey.

That of Russia was, he said, traditional, and there was not a child in the country who was not not aware that she never lost sight of her object of weakening and undermining the Sultan's Empire.

He had constantly to sit and listen to the professions of friendliness from the Russian Ambassador, and to his declaration of the manner in which he was defending the Porte from the aggressive policy of his Austrian colleague. It was with difficulty that he could keep his patience while all this was being poured out to him, for he knew what it was worth.

That Russia, however, should be at heart inimical, whatever the professions of the Ambassador might be, was no more than what he and every one else was prepared for; but what he could not understand was that Austria should make common cause with her, as appeared now to be the case.

That Power had been so long regarded as a true friend to the Empire that it was as painful as inapplicable to see it suddenly go into the enemy's camp, and he asked how it was to be accounted for.

I said that whatever doubt the change in the Austrian policy might be calculated to provoke, His Highness would, I believe, be mistaken in attributing to her any deliberate hostility.

Count Andrassy had repeatedly explained his views to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna, and also to myself in passing through Pesth in the spring, and there seemed no reason to doubt his sincerity.

He had frankly stated that his object was to acquire an influence over the Christian populations of the Provinces bordering upon Hungary by the exhibition of sympathy for them as great as that of Russia; but his declaration was explicit that this influence would always be exerted to restrain them within proper limits, and he expected in that manner to be able to counterbalance any evil designs that might be entertained in other quarters.

The Grand Vizier said he hoped it might be so, but that it was not easy to believe in the friendliness of those who made common cause, and even outstepped known enemies in creating embarrassments to the Sultan's Government, and in offering encouragement to the disaffection of some classes of his subjects.

In reporting this conversation, I cannot refrain from drawing your Lordship's attention to the curious position held at this moment by the Russian Ambassador and myself.

He, while acting in concert with the Austrian Ambassador in the question at issue, assiduous in fomenting a distrust of the Austrian designs, and I, blaming and regretting the course that is being followed, exerting myself to allay the suspicion it is calculated to create, though, with the appearances so strongly on the side of my colleague, my success is not likely to be great.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 147.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 9.)

(No. 13. Commercial.)
Bucharest, December 3, 1874.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 11, Commercial, of the 24th October, I have the honour to inclose a copy of the reply of the Roumanian Government to our collective note of the 12th of October, which pointed out the mistake made by our Delegates in fixing a term for the existing Tariff, and reasserted our previous reserve of the rights of our respective Governments to oppose any premature modification of the existing Tariff arrangements.

Your Lordship will observe that the Roumanian Government, in their turn, reassert and maintain their right to establish new Customs arrangements; and as their Tariff Commission is making good progress towards the completion of its labours, it is evident that the Government intend eventually to proceed with the new Tariff, although I doubt its being ready by the 1st of January, the date contemplated by the Customs Law passed last session.

It is probable, I think, that they will first watch the progress of their negotiations of Commercial Conventions with their neighbours, and then apply their Tariff to the commerce of such nations as do not enter into direct arrangements with Roumania.

I have already informed your Lordship that, so far as I can learn, the new Tariff will deal favourably with the principal British imports here, with the exception, perhaps, of cheap earthenware, whose competition with their native industry I believe they fear. Coals, machinery, and manufactured iron are, I believe, to be imported free of duty; and Manchester cotton goods, for which there is always a large and increasing demand here, at the rate of about 6 per cent.

Were it not for the principle involved by the infractions of our Treaty with Turkey that I have pointed out in the law, we should probably not have much reason to complain of the Tariff, or to desire, for the present at any rate, a Commercial Convention; but Her Majesty's Government will possibly think it advisable that our commerce should not be left entirely to the mercy or caprice of the Roumanian Government, and that its position should be more securely defined. I am awaiting your Lordship's instructions upon the subject; for although my colleagues have hitherto acted with me in this matter, I doubt their going any further, even should

the Roumanian Government disregard our protest, without instructions from their Governments.

I should add that the Romanian note, although dated the 28th of October, has, by the neglect of some of our Consular body, only been circulated to me to-day.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

Inclosure in No. 147.

M. Boeresco to Baron de Fara.

Bucarest, le $\frac{17}{29}$ Octobre, 1874.

M. le Baron,

J'AI reçu la note que vous avez bien voulu m'adresser en date du 20 Octobre courant, et par laquelle, en présence de la déclaration contenue dans le procès-verbal de la Commission chargée de la révision du Tarif d'exportation concernant le maintien de ce Tarif, vous croyez devoir revenir en votre nom, et en celui de Messieurs vos collègues, sur la note de M. l'Agent Diplomatique de Russie du $\frac{15}{27}$ Septembre dernier.

En réponse à votre note précitée, j'ai l'honneur de vous informer, M. le Baron, que je n'hésiterai pas à reconnaître que la déclaration dont il s'agit ne saurait engager, d'aucune manière, ni les Gouvernments étrangers ni le Gouvernement Roumain, car les Délégués désignés par le Corps Diplomatique et Consulaire pour participer aux travaux de la Commission de Révision du Tarif d'Exportation étaient appelés à représenter au sein de la dite Commission le commerce étranger seulement, et nullement les Gouvernements étrangers, qu'ils n'avaient pas qualité de représenter.

Par suite de ces explications il ne me reste, M. le Baron, qu'à réitérer aussi de mon côté, au nom du Gouvernement Princier, la réserve faite par la note de ce Ministère en date du $\frac{13}{25}$ Septembre dernier, au sujet des effets du Tarif que la Commission Mixte avait été invitée à reviser.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) B. BOERESCO.

No. 148.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 10.)

(No. 324. Confidential.)

Berlin, December 7, 1874.

My Lord,

HERR V. BÜLOW called on me to-day, and told me, with reference to our Confidential conversation of the 30th ultimo, reported in my despatch No. 312, Secret, of the same date, that Prince Bismarck had received answers from St. Petersburgh and Vienna, respecting the suggestion that the Porte should issue a Firman authorizing the Government of the Principalities to conclude Commercial Conventions, and that it had been most favourably received by Prince Gortchakow, and consented to by Count Andrassy.

Prince Bismarck had, in consequence, instructed the German Ambassador in London to communicate with your Lordship on the subject, as well as on that of your Lordship's instructions to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, No. 222, of the 20th of November, which had been imparted through me to His Serene Highness on the 28th ultimo.

No further information on the subject had, however, been since received from Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 149.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 11.)

(Telegraphic.)

Buda Pesth, December 10, 1874, 11:30 P.M.

A TELEGRAM from St. Petersburgh was shown to me this evening, by Foreign Minister stating that Gortchakow entirely concurred in objection to Conference at

Constantinople, and believed that Porte were disposed to act by Firman. Andrassy observed, in reply to inquiry from me, that terms of the Firman could not affect the position taken by Austria already in the question.

No. 150.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 12.)

(No. 120. Confidential.)

Rome, December 2, 1874.

My Lord,

I HAD the honour to receive your Lordship's telegram giving the substance of a communication made by Prince Bismarck to the Turkish Ambassador at Berlin, as reported by Sir Henry Elliot, and of his Excellency's conversation with the Grand Vizier thereupon, and, on the following day, your Lordship's further telegram, stating the reply which you had sent to Sir Henry Elliot.

Although not authorized to do so, I thought that your Lordship would not object to my making Chevalier Visconti Venosta confidentially acquainted with the tenor of these despatches, and I consequently did so in an interview which I had with his Excellency yesterday afternoon.

I confined myself to stating that it appeared from a telegram addressed to your Lordship from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople that Prince Bismarck had suggested to the Turkish Ambassador at Berlin that the Sultan should issue a Firman authorizing the Roumanian Government to conclude Commercial Conventions, and promised that Germany would give Prince Charles no further support if he would not be satisfied with this. I added that the Grand Vizier seemed inclined to follow this advice, if there were no other solution, and if Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that the Porte might properly agree to it; that your Lordship had desired Sir Henry Elliot to state that instructions had already been sent to him to advise the Porte to acquiesce in the Principalities concluding Commercial Treaties as an initiatory part of the coming revision of the Turkish Commercial Treaties.

M. Visconti Venosta, after thanking me for this communication, said that he was glad to see that there was a disposition on the part of one of the Powers who had recently addressed the Porte on the subject of concluding Commercial Treaties with the Principalities to assist the Turkish Government in escaping from the difficult position in which they were placed, and he formed the sincerest wishes for the success of the advice which was now offered.

At the same time, he could not help fearing that even the prospect of forfeiting the support of Germany would hardly be found sufficient to induce Prince Charles and his Government to acknowledge the Sultan's Firman, and thus abandon the principle for which they contended, viz., that they had an absolute right to conclude international Conventions, and had, consequently, no need of the Sultan's authority for so doing.

It is not necessary that I should trouble your Lordship with an account of what passed further on this subject in the conversation of yesterday, and I therefore proceed to relate the interview of to-day, which I sought in consequence of the receipt last evening of your Lordship's telegrams dated respectively yesterday afternoon 2:30 P.M. and 3·0 P.M.

I began by saying that your Lordship had had a confirmation from Berlin of the advice given by Prince Bismarck to the Turkish Ambassador, but that Prince Bismarck was greatly alarmed at the indiscretion of the Porte, and the offence his secret advice might give to his Allies, to whom he had telegraphed to ask whether they would agree to the issue of a Firman authorizing Roumania to conclude Commercial Treaties, and that his Highness urgently begged for secrecy. I should consequently be glad, I said, if I were enabled to state to your Lordship that the information which I had given him (M. Visconti Venosta) had not gone any further, and that he would continue to keep it, and what I had just now added, secret.

His Excellency replied that I might assure your Lordship that he had not disclosed a word to any one, not even in his own Department, of what I had told him, and that he would continue to observe silence thereupon.

His Excellency then proceeded to speak with more freedom than he had yet done of his own communications and views on the subject we were talking of.

He said that when the Turkish Government had announced to him through their Minister here the step which had been taken by the three Powers, and asked him for the

opinion of the Italian Government, he had in the first place replied in general terms that he thought the Porte, while maintaining its political rights, should endeavour to find some means of satisfying the material requirements of the Principalities and the neighbouring Powers, but feeling that his advice having been asked for it behoved him to give some more explicit answer than the above, he had proceeded to consider what might possibly afford a means of arriving at a reconciliation of the conflicting views which were in presence of each other. He begged me to understand, however, that he had never contemplated drawing up a formal proposal of accommodation; all that he meant to do was to state through the Italian Minister at Constantinople, in reply to the invitation which had been addressed to him by the Porte, the course which he thought the Sultan's Government might adopt in order to save their own dignity and authority, and at the same time give satisfaction to the three Powers and the Principalities.

In the first place, then, his Excellency proceeded to say, he had thought of a plan similar to Prince Bismarck's, the spontaneous issue of a Firman by the Sultan authorizing the Principalities to conclude these Conventions, but he had convinced himself in conversation with the Roumanian Agent here that the Government of Prince Charles would take no account whatever of this Firman, and that the manner in which it might be received at Bucharest would perhaps only make matters worse than at present. In fact, in speaking to M. Esarco one day he (M. Visconti-Venosta) said he had observed casually to him, "But suppose the Sultan were to issue his Firman granting you the permission to conclude these Treaties?" "Well," said M. Esarco, shrugging his shoulders, "we should take no account of it; we do not require a Firman permitting us to do a thing which we have already a right to do, and we should treat it as *non avenu*."

"After this," said M. Visconti-Venosta, "I gave up the idea of the Firman, and I turned my attention to something else."

On reflection, it seemed to him, he continued, that if the three Powers would consent, after the conclusion of their Conventions, to communicate them officially to the Sultan's Government as the Suzerain, the Porte might possibly accept this transaction as a minimum. But, before making any such suggestion at Constantinople, M. Visconti Venosta said he had been anxious to ascertain whether his proposal would have any chance of acceptance with the Power which appeared the most interested in this question; and he had, therefore, spoken on the subject to the Austrian Minister, who had promised to consult his Government, but he had not yet received any reply from him. In any case, his Excellency said, he should now hold his hand until the result of Prince Bismarck's plan was known.

I inquired of M. Visconti Venosta whether M. Esarco spoke in a way to make him think that the Government of the Principalities desired to become completely independent of the Porte. "Not exactly that," was M. Visconti Venosta's reply, "but they wish the connection to sit as lightly on them as possible." "In other words," I said, "they wish for all the benefits of the connection, but none of its obligations." M. Visconti Venosta acquiesced.

In regard to his Excellency's plan of arrangement, I ventured to submit to him whether, if it ever took a practical shape, it would not be more complete if the Principalities could also be brought to communicate the Treaties to the Suzerain. M. Visconti Venosta agreed that this would be desirable if it could be obtained.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 151.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 12.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Therapia, December* 11, 1874.

MUSURUS PASHA informs the Porte by telegraph that your Lordship is far from unfavourable to the thought of referring Roumanian Treaty Question to a Conference.

For better guidance, I should be glad to know your Lordship's views upon the expediency of such a course which, notwithstanding some words which the Grand Vizier dropped to the Austrian Ambassador, the Porte has hitherto no wish to resort to.

No. 152.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 14.)

(No. 330. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, December* 9, 1874.

ON receiving your Lordship's telegram of yesterday's date, respecting a telegram from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna, according to which Count Andrassy thinks the proposed issue of a Firman by the Porte, authorizing the Roumanian Government to negotiate Commercial Treaties inexpedient, I called on Herr von Bülow and asked his Excellency whether he had heard from Vienna of any changes, since telling me that Count Andrassy had agreed to that suggestion, as reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 324 of the 7th instant.

Herr von Bülow told me that, after we had met, the German Ambassador at Vienna had also telegraphed to Prince Bismarck in the same sense as Sir Andrew Buchanan to your Lordship, that Count Andrassy appeared less favourable to the suggestions than he had been at first, but his opinion did not after all amount to any serious objection to the course proposed, so that no fresh complication was likely to ensue, if the Turkish Government chose to follow it.

Your Lordship will have been made acquainted with Prince Bismarck's views on the subject, through Count Münster, before this Report can reach London.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 153.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 15.)

(No. 63. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, December* 8, 1874.

MY Russian colleague tells me in confidence that he has recently received instructions from Prince Gortchakow to warn the Roumanian Government not to suppose that the right of concluding commercial arrangements with foreign Powers, which Russia had supported as a concession of practical necessity for the commerce between Roumania and her neighbours, will in any way alter or affect the existing political ties between the Porte and the Principalities; and he is desired to lay stress on this warning in concert with his colleagues of Germany and Austria.

He quite agreed with me that this declaration would not be very satisfactory to the Roumanian Government, whose ultimate aims and objects were probably not confined to a release from commercial restrictions.

I should add that I rather inferred from M. Zinoview's language that, although the motive for which Russia had supported the concession required by Roumania was really her recognition of its absolute necessity to the development of Russian trade with the Principalities; yet that the arrangement might probably have been negotiated with more consideration for the susceptibility of the Porte had the relations between Russia and Turkey been more cordial.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 154.

M. Cadorna to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 15.)

M. le Comte, 25, *Grosvenor Street, W., le* 12 *Décembre*, 1874.

PAR dépêche de son Excellence le Ministre Secrétaire d'Etat de Sa Majesté pour les Affaires Etrangères, je viens de recevoir l'ordre de présenter à votre Excellence ses remercîments pour la communication qui lui a été faite par Sir A. Paget de la dépêche de votre Excellence au Noble Lord l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté Britannique à Constantinople en date du 20 Novembre passé, touchant l'affaire des Conventions Commerciales entre les Principautés Danubiennes et les Puissances étrangères.

En même temps j'ai reçu l'instruction de communiquer à votre Excellence la copie d'une dépêche de M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères au Ministre de Sa

Majesté le Roi à Constantinople en date du 3 courant, laquelle copie j'ai l'honneur d'annexer à la présente lettre.

Le Gouvernement du Roi, quoique ayant conservé dans le passé la prudente réserve que d'autres Puissances ont suivi dans cette affaire, laquelle il croit avoir contribué à la maintenir dans les limites qui étaient assignés à la nature des intérêts auxquels l'Allemagne, l'Autriche-Hongrie, et la Russie avaient déclaré de vouloir pourvoir, n'a pas pourtant omis dès la première période de cette affaire de s'inspirer, dans ses instructions aux Représentants du Gouvernement à l'étranger, à l'esprit de conciliation qui a dicté les instructions du Gouvernement Britannique, et il avait aussi d'après cette époque fait ressortir la connexion qui existait entre cette affaire et la dénonciation des Traités Commerciaux faite par la Sublime Porte aux différentes Puissances. Par une postérieure et récente communication verbale, Sir A. Paget ayant annoncé à M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine avait à plusieurs reprises recommandé à la Sublime Porte d'adhérer à la conclusion des Conventions Commerciales des Principautés, et que, quant à la forme d'une telle adhésion, son Gouvernement ne s'était pas prononcé, considérant qu'il appartenait spécialement à la Sublime Porte de prendre une résolution à ce sujet, et Sir A. Paget ayant ajouté que si la Turquie avait trouvé opportun de resoudre les difficultés en émettant un Firman Impérial, le Gouvernement Britannique n'avait pas d'objections à faire, dans le cas qu'un tel parti fût adopté, M. le Chevalier Visconti Venosta m'exprime la satisfaction d'avoir acquis par cela la certitude que la ligne de conduite du Gouvernement Italien dans cette affaire ne soit pas différente de celle adoptée par le Gouvernement Britannique. Mon Gouvernement se rejouit de ce que, même à l'avenir, son action conciliative auprès de la Sublime Porte s'expliquera dans le même sens des instructions que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine a données à son Ambassadeur à Constantinople.

Je saisis, &c.
(Signé) C. CADORNA.

Inclosure in No. 154.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs to the Royal Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople.

(Translation.) *Rome, December* 3, 1874.

ON the 10th of August last, after a conversation with the Representative of Turkey, I laid down the rules which His Majesty's Government wished you to follow in the affair relative to the Commercial Treaties of Roumania. In that despatch of mine a distinction was made amongst the facts which might have an influence in the resolutions to be taken, between those which belong to the political order and those which regard the economical order. And from that time you have been aware that the Italian Government wished that means might be found acceptable to all the Powers to satisfy in just measure the rights of the Porte and the special exigencies of the Principalities and of some States created by their reciprocal commercial relations.

In the conversations which I have repeatedly had with Caratheodory Effendi, I have kept firmly to this opinion that the Ottoman Porte, by a wise tractability, would itself find the terms of a satisfactory arrangement. And when more recently the Ottoman Envoy communicated to me the identical instructions presented to his Government by the interpreters of Austria-Hungary, of Germany, and of Russia, and the note of Aarifi Pasha in reply to that communication, I was glad to see that, from the two documents, it appeared manifest that it was the intention of all the parties to settle the question in the order of the economical facts and financial interests when the means of eliminating the political question had been found.

His Majesty's Government would have been all the more easily able to take a direct part in seeking the terms of an arrangement, as its conduct was justly appreciated by the Porte as being inspired by sentiments of sincere friendship, and by a very earnest desire to avoid political complications. But, in the present situation of affairs, we have not thought it necessary to take an initiative which becomes superfluous, inasmuch as, according to information which has reached us, proceedings are in course between those Cabinets which have hitherto treated this question that will probably have the effect of removing every cause of dispute. Those Cabinets having already formally declared that the commercial agreements which they intend to conclude with the Administration of the Principalities do not prejudice the political situation of the Principalities themselves in regard to the high sovereign Power, that Power ought not

now to have any difficulty in consenting, in the form which it retains itself the full right of choosing, to that which may afford a just satisfaction to the interests of various kinds concerned in this affair. His Majesty's Government is aware that England also has advised the Porte to try the effect of tractability on the question of form, since there are already the most explicit declarations of the Cabinets which have opened the proceedings in safeguard of the political interest. We therefore flatter ourselves that this question will be soon settled, and that the Porte will this time also follow the counsels of that wise and prudent policy of which it has given example in circumstances of much greater importance.

Accept, &c.
(Signed) VISCONTI VENOSTA.

No. 155.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, December* 15, 1874, 2·45 P.M.

IN reply to your telegram of the 11th instant, I greatly doubt the expediency of a Conference. It is impossible to say what questions may or may not be raised when once it meets. Nor do I perceive necessity for it, as in substance all the Powers are agreed as to what they wish the Porte to do, and the Porte itself does not appear to object in principle.

No. 156.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 280. Confidential.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 15, 1874.

IN reply to your Excellency's telegram of the 11th instant inquiring my views as to convoking a Conference on the Roumanian question, I have to inform you that I greatly doubt the expediency of a Conference upon the Roumanian question. It is impossible to say what questions might or might not be raised if once it should meet; nor do I perceive any necessity for it, as in substance all the Powers are agreed as to what they wish the Porte to do, and the Porte itself does not appear to object in principle.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 157.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December* 15.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, December* 15, 1874.

ROUMANIAN Government having heard that the Porte intend to send a Firman authorizing Commercial Conventions, have decided in Council to telegraph to their agent at Constantinople that the Firman would be refused at Bucharest.

No. 158.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December* 16.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, December* 16, 1874.

I HAVE sent to-day this telegram to Constantinople:—

"Foreign Minister earnestly begs me to warn your Excellency of the serious mischief that may arise from the issue of a Firman which the Prince and his Government are determined to repudiate, and, if necessary, to protest against.

* This telegram was repeated to Lord Lyons, Lord Odo Russell, Lord A. Loftus Sir A. Buchanan, and Sir A. Paget.

"I know nothing of what has provoked this beyond that the Government hear from their agent at Constantinople that you advise the issue of a Firman authorizing the Conventions."

No. 159.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

(No. 275. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, December* 16, 1874.

THE German Ambassador called at this office on the 8th instant, and read a telegram from Berlin expressing the satisfaction of Prince Bismarck at the reception which had been given by the Governments of Austria and Russia to the suggestion made some few days previously by your Excellency for the settlement of the question of the Roumanian Commercial Conventions by the issue of a Firman by the Porte. The Prince had hesitated to signify his concurrence in this suggestion until he had ascertained the views of those Governments, but he had now much pleasure in concurring in it, and begged to thank Her Majesty's Government for its having been offered. He hoped that it would lead to a speedy and satisfactory solution of the question.

It was pointed out to his Excellency that there must be some misunderstanding, as the suggestion did not come from your Excellency or from Her Majesty's Government. All that Her Majesty's Government had done was to advise the Porte to acquiesce in those Treaties being concluded by the Principalities as an initiatory part of the revision of the Turkish Commercial Treaties. No particular mode of proceeding had been recommended.

On the 12th instant Count Münster called again at this office and explained that there had been some confusion in the telegram which he had previously read. The fact was that Prince Bismarck had himself made the suggestion, or rather hint, in an informal conversation with Aristarchi Bey, who had at once communicated it to the Porte, by whom he believed it had been accepted.

Your Excellency is aware that this account is the same as that which has been received by Her Majesty's Government from the Turkish Ambassador and Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople, but that the Porte has not yet taken any decisive action to carry out the proposal of a Firman so far as Her Majesty's Government are informed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 160.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 17.)

(No. 62.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, December* 7, 1874.

THE draft Address, in reply to the Prince's Speech which I sent home on the 27th ultimo, has been laid on the table of the House, and will be debated and probably passed to-morrow.

It contains the following paragraph, in reply to the Prince's allusion to the position of foreign affairs, and to the consideration in which Roumania is held abroad:—

"L'harmonie entre les pouvoirs de l'Etat et l'ordre qui a régné à l'intérieur du pays devaient nécessairement éveiller la confiance au dehors, et nous sommes convaincus qu'aujourd'hui plus que jamais nous pouvons compter sur le bienveillant appui des Puissances Garantes. La défense de nos droits trouve dans le maintien strict des Traités et de nos anciennes Capitulations une base dont personne ne peut contester la légitimité. Sur ce terrain nous sommes prêts à tous les sacrifices que pourraient demander les circonstances. Les progrès accomplis dans l'armée nous prouvent que le Gouvernement s'est rendu compte des exigences d'un progrès rationnel outre le développement des intérêts matériels, nous nous efforcerons de ne jamais négliger les moyens d'entretenir et d'augmenter la virilité de la nation!"

The reporter of this Address is a certain M. de Carp, a young Moldavian deputy

of the Conservative party, formerly Roumanian Agent at Vienna, and for a short time Minister for Foreign Affairs.

With reference to the commercial negotiations, I gather from M. Boerescо that a draft Convention has actually been submitted to the Austrian Government by the Roumanian Agent, and that negotiations are also opened at St. Petersburgh, but his evident hopelessness of any sympathy from England in this question indisposes M. Boerescо to favour me with much of his confidence, and I clearly see that the support they have received at Constantinople has strengthened the position of the Government, and indisposed them to make any concession which might in any way invalidate their assumed rights.

Thus, I doubt if they would accept the permission of the Porte to conclude Conventions, even were it offered spontaneously.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

P.S.—The Address was voted to-day by a very large majority, showing in this the first trial of strength between the two parties that the Government is as strong as ever. The Opposition commented strongly upon the paragraph relating to foreign affairs, asking what sacrifices the country could be called upon to make, and against whom they would be directed if the friendly support of the Guaranteeing Powers were really secured.

No explanation appears to have been given by the Government upon this point.
C. V.

No. 161.

*Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.**—(*Received December* 17.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, December* 17, 1874, 7.15 P.M.

I HAVE sent the following to Mr. Vivian in answer to his telegram of yesterday:—

"Although by instruction from Her Majesty's Government I have urged Porte to grant Roumanian Government the right of making Commercial Conventions, I do not recommend to them any particular mode of proceeding. A Firman has been spoken of as one way of granting it; but does not seem likely to be adopted by the Porte."

No. 162.

*Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.**—(*Received December* 17.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, December* 17, 1874, 10 P.M.

THE Grand Vizier yesterday said to the Russian Ambassador that the Porte might have to invite a Conference on the Roumanian question. The General strongly combatted the suggestion. The Grand Vizier replied that as the Powers seemed all to disagree among themselves as to the position of the Porte, and the course to be adopted, a Conference might afford the best means of coming to an understanding.

No. 163.

*Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.**—(*Received December* 17.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Therapia, December* 17, 1874, 10·30 P.M.

THE German Ambassador tells me that the Roumanian Agent having told him that if a Firman was issued his Government would reject it; he told him that if they took that course they would be supported neither by Prussia nor either, he believed, by the other two Powers.

The Austrian Ambassador, who a few days ago was strongly in favour of the Firman, to-day begged me to urge the Porte not to issue it.

* This telegram was repeated to Lord Lyons, Lord Odo Russell, Lord A. Loftus, Sir A. Buchanan, and Sir A. Paget.

The Russian Ambassador has told the Grand Vizier that he has heard nothing on the subject from Prince Gortchakow, but that he himself thinks it unadvisable.

He has also declared to Grand Vizier that your Lordship's despatch No. 222 recommends concession much in excess of what was required.

No. 164.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 18.)

(No. 132.)

My Lord, *Rome, December* 15, 1874.

I HAVE to apologize for not having informed your Lordship that, in compliance with the instructions conveyed to me in your Lordship's despatch No. 204 of the 27th of November, I communicated to the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, in a note dated the 30th of November, a copy of your Lordship's despatch No. 222 of the 20th of that month to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, stating the views of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the conclusion of Commercial Conventions between the Danubian Principalities and foreign Powers.

In an interview which I subsequently had with Chevalier Visconti Venosta, his Excellency informed me that he had desired Chevalier Cadorna to thank your Lordship for having put him in possession of this most interesting despatch, and at the same time to communicate to you the last instructions which had been sent to the Italian Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 165.

*Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby**.—(*Received December* 17.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, December* 17, 1874.

FRENCH Agent has received instructions from his Government to tell Roumanian Government that they put themselves in the wrong before the Powers if they refuse the Firman, and strongly to urge its acceptance.

I doubt success of his unsupported efforts. Prime Minister told me that if all the Powers supported Firman his Government would resign, and the Prince would hardly find a Ministry who will accept it.

Whatever settlement is decided on, it will be essential to its acceptance that the agents of all the Powers unite in supporting it sincerely.

I have received no instructions as yet.

No. 166.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.†—(*Received December* 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Buda Pesth, December* 17, 1874.

NO information has been received by Austrian Minister of the Bucharest Government having decided to refuse a Firman, but in answer to Berlin, he stated his opinion that they probably would, and if so, that the Three Powers after their declaration could not interfere. He therefore repeats his opinion that the Porte cannot close question more advantageously for itself than by notes to all the Powers, assenting to their concluding with Principalities Commercial Conventions of the kind described in the Declaration.

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* This telegram was repeated to Lord Lyons, Lord Odo Russell, Lord A. Loftus, Sir A. Buchanan, and Sir A. Paget.

† This telegram was repeated to Lord Lyons, Lord Odo Russell, Lord A. Loftus, and Sir A. Paget.

No. 167.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 18.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rome, December* 18, 1874.

ITALIAN Consul-General at Bucharest confirms intelligence received by you.

Yesterday, Austro-Hungarian Minister read to M. V. Venosta a confidential despatch from Count Andrassy, discussing the suggestion that the Commercial Conventions, when concluded with Principalities, should be communicated officially to the Porte. Its substance is that Austrian-Hungary, having constantly contended that Roumanian Government had the right to conclude such Conventions, cannot now adopt a course which would be in contradiction to this principle.

M. Venosta replied that he had always abstained from entering into the question whether the Principalities had this right or not. His object had been to find an issue from present difficulty without sacrificing rights acknowledged by all; and he was not convinced by Count Andrassy's reasoning. If the suggestion he had made were followed the Austro-Hungarian Government would place itself in opposition to the theory which it sustained.

M. Visconti Venosta never intended, as supposed by Sir A. Buchanan, that the Conventions should be submitted for ratification, but only officially made known to the Porte as the Suzerain Power. This seems to be perfectly understood by Count Andrassy.

In a further confidential despatch Count Andrassy gives the substance of a conversation with the Turkish Ambassador respecting the proposed Conference, which, he said, could not favour Turkey, as she would be sure to have three Powers against her, and possibly others.

M. Venosta does not desire a Conference, and thinks the more the present question is treated as a local or special one the better, but the Italian Government would not decline to attend.

I have acquainted him with your Lordship's views, and we have promised to communicate frankly with each other.

No. 168.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

(No. 38.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 19, 1874.

I HAVE received your despatch, Commercial, No. 13 of the 3rd instant, inclosing a copy of the reply of the Roumanian Government to the collective note addressed to them by the Consular body at Bucharest, on the 20th of October last, respecting the proposed revision of the Roumanian Tariff. I am to transmit to you for your information a copy of the instructions sent to Sir H. Elliot,* upon the question of the Principalities concluding separate Treaties with foreign Powers without the previous sanction of the Porte, and I have to add that Her Majesty's Government reserve any opinion as to entering upon communications with the Government of the Principalities, in regard to the proposed new Tariff, until the issue of the communications being exchanged among the Treaty Powers and with the Porte, on the question of Commercial Conventions, is determined.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 169.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

(No. 39. Confidential.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, December* 19, 1874.

I HAVE received your telegram of the 16th instant reporting that the Foreign Minister had told you that the Prince and the Roumanian Government were determined to repudiate, and if necessary, to protest against the issue of a Firman by the Porte on the subject of the Commercial Conventions, and had asked you to warn Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople of the mischief which a Firman might

* No. 109.

occasion, and I have to acquaint you that the proposal that the Porte should issue a Firman authorising the Government of the Principalities to conclude Commercial Treaties with foreign Powers emanated from Prince Bismarck.

I have to instruct you to urge firmly and confidentially upon the Roumanian Government not to precipitate matters while the question is still being discussed by the Treaty Powers, who have, as Her Majesty's Government are informed from Berlin, all concurred in the suggested issue of a Firman.

In my despatch No. 38 of to-day's date you will have received a copy of the instructions which have been given to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople for his guidance in this matter, and you will see that Her Majesty's Government have advised the Porte to acquiesce in the conclusion of Treaties by the Principalities as part of the arrangements for the revision of the Turkish Commercial Treaties, but have not advised any particular form of doing this.

Her Majesty's Government have since merely repeated that they offer no advice but see no objection to the Firman.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 170.

*The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.**

Foreign Office, December 11, 1874.

(Télégraphie.)

THE suggestion that the Porte should issue a Firman came from Prince Bismarck, but was made informally and confidentially. Urge firmly the Roumanian Government, confidentially, not to precipitate matters while the question is still being discussed by the Treaty Powers, who have, as we are informed from Berlin, all concurred in the suggested issue of a Firman.

A copy of the instructions to Sir H. Elliot is on its way to you, from which you will see that Her Majesty's Government have advised the Porte to acquiesce in the conclusion of Treaties by the Principalities as part of the arrangements for the decision of the Turkish Commercial Treaties, but have not advised any particular form of doing this. We have since repeated that we offer no advice, but see no objection to the Firman.

No. 171.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

Foreign Office, December 19, 1874, 3·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

INQUIRE confidentially what view Prince Bismarck takes of the situation of the Roumanian question, as shown in Mr. Vivian's telegram sent to you on the 16th instant.

No. 172.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Odo Russell.

Foreign Office, December 19, 1874.

(Telegraphic.)

MY telegraph of to-day refers also to Mr. Vivian's second telegram sent you yesterday.

No. 173.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 19, *at night.)*

Buda Pesth, December 19, 1874, 11·55 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, acquainting me with reports from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople of his answer to Bucharest,

* This telegram was repeated to Lord Lyons, Lord Odo Russell, Lord A. Loftus, Sir A. Buchanan, Sir H. Elliot, and Sir A. Paget.

and of the wish expressed by the Grand Vizier to the Russian Ambassador for a Conference, and to your Lordship's previous telegrams, I have had a conversation with the Foreign Minister to-day. He said Bismarck denies having recommended a Firman, and that a Conference would be objectionable, as affording an opportunity for claims from Montenegro and Servia, and for raising other questions; whereas identic notes from the Porte to all the Powers and to the Principalities, assenting to the declaration of the three Powers, would not require an answer from Bucharest.

I told him that your Lordship doubted the expediency of a Conference for the same reasons he had given, and after assuring him that I had no authority from your Lordship to make any suggestion on the subject, I said that the Porte might possibly have less objection to assent, as he proposed, to the declaration of the three Powers, if it could be done by a Protocol, signed by the Representatives of all the Powers, recording its own interpretation of the Treaty and that of the other Powers, as well as of the three Powers; but he answered that notes from the Porte would be a more simple proceeding. I then asked what he would do if the Porte persisted in its right to convoke a Conference; and he said that he might decline it, but it would be time enough to decide when invited.

No. 174.

Aarifi Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, December 19.)

Le 9 Décembre, 1874.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

J'AI reçu, avec son annexe, la dépêche responsive que votre Excellence a bien voulu m'écrire le 19 November dernier, relativement à la prétention des Principautés de conclure des Conventions Commerciales avec les Puissances étrangères.

Les observations verbales que vous avez adressées à Lord Derby, jointes à vos autres communications, font ressortir on ne peut mieux le véritable caractère de la question. J'en félicite sincèrement votre Excellence, tout en la remerciant des efforts éclairés qu'elle ne cesse de déployer pour prévenir toute méprise sur le but et la portée de nos démarches. Ces efforts commencent à produire leur effet; les instructions du Chef du Foreign Office à Sir Henry Elliot viennent d'arriver; elles répondent entièrement à notre attente; elles font voir que le Cabinet de St. James partage, comme votre Excellence l'avait télégraphié du reste, notre manière d'envisager la prétention dont il s'agit, et que, si nous différons un peu d'opinion sur certaines questions de détail, cette divergence n'est point de nature à exclure la possibilité d'une entente complète quant à la marche à suivre, surtout lorsque l'idée de conférence aura prévalu au sein des divers Cabinets. Nous comptons en cela, comme en toute autre occurrence pareille, sur le concours amical de l'éminent homme d'Etat qui dirige les relations extérieures de la Grande Bretagne, et ce que sa Seigneurie a déjà fait est une sûre garantie de ce qu'elle voudra bien faire encore. Je prie votre Excellence d'être auprès de Lord Derby l'interprète de nos sentiments.

Veuillez agréer, &c.
(Signé) A. AARIFI.

No. 175.

*Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.**—*(Received December* 20, *at night.)*

Buda Pesth, December 20, 1874.

(Telegraphic.)

THE Foreign Minister has received telegram from the Austrian Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting that the Porte will settle the question by the issue of Circular notes.

He said, however, I must have misunderstood him in informing your Lordship that he considered a note, which would be the same as a Firman, should be addressed to Bucharest, as he only meant that the Government of Bucharest could not answer or protest against the contents of notes to the Powers, and he even says no opportunity should be given them of complicating the question.

As I asked him distinctly when he spoke, two days ago, of no answer being required from Bucharest, whether, according to his proposal, a note would be

* This telegram was repeated to Lord Lyons, Lord Odo Russell, Lord A. Loftus, and Sir A. Paget.

addressed to that Government, I cannot account for a mistake having occurred as to his answer.

Copy of this has been sent to Sir Henry Elliot.

No. 176.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 21.)

(No. 333. Confidential.)

Therapia, December 5, 1874.

My Lord,

YOUR Lordship's despatch No. 222 of the 20th ultimo, upon the question of the Roumanian Commercial Conventions, did not reach me till the 2nd instant.

I at once had a copy made of it, which I sent the following morning to Aarify Pasha, accompanied by an unofficial French translation, to enable his Excellency to take immediate cognizance of it without the usual delay which takes place at the Porte in regard to documents in English.

The substance of your telegraphic instruction of the 2nd, which reached me on the 3rd instant, was communicated yesterday.

I have to-day seen both Aarify Pasha and the Grand Vizier, and spoke to them on the subject of these communications, and found that while the former decidedly inclines to the issue of a Firman, as suggested by Prince Bismarck, the latter appears more disposed than I thought him a few days ago to hold out against all concession; but I was rather surprised to learn that the Minister for Foreign Affairs had not yet made him acquainted with either of the two important communications of which I had wished His Highness to have full cognizance before discussing the question with him.

The Russian Ambassador had just left the Grand Vizier when I saw him, and had told him that what the Principalities insisted upon was the right of making formal Treaties, and that nothing short of this would satisfy them, and it seems to have been insinuated that Austria was encouraging this pretension.

The Grand Vizier attaches an exaggerated importance to the distinction between Conventions and Treaties, and it was evident that the language of the Russian Ambassador had tended much to indispose him to make a concession which he thought might lead to no particular result, but perhaps prepare the way for further demands.

He said he was perfectly aware that the refusal of the Porte to sanction the conclusion of the Conventions would not deter the Austrian-Hungarian Government from making them, and that the Porte would necessarily have to submit to see it done, but his present impression was, though it was only an impression, that this might be preferable to a voluntary sacrifice of the Sultan's rights.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 177.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 21.)

(No. 340. Confidential.)

Therapia, December 11, 1874.

My Lord,

I SENT yesterday morning to Aarify Pasha to say that your Lordship had telegraphed to me that Prince Gortchakow warmly approved, and Count Andrassy accepted, Prince Bismarck's suggestion for the issue of a Firman, granting to the Principalities the privilege of concluding Commercial Conventions, and I pointed out to him the importance of this information, which might be regarded as nearly equivalent to a declaration from the three Powers that the right in question does not at present reside in the Roumanian Government.

In his Excellency answer, sent to me this morning, he recognizes the full importance of the communication, but adds that the Porte will therefore wait till "that idea finds its expression in a proposition emanating from the Powers" before coming to any decision; but whether he refers to the three Northern or to the Western Powers is not clear.

I have, however, reminded him that while Her Majesty's Government had expressed the hope that the Porte would confer upon the Principalities the privilege contended for, they had declined to urge the adoption of any special mode of conveying the consent, which was rather a matter for the consideration of the Porte itself; but that, if he were to address an inquiry to all the Powers whether they thought that by means of a Firman the question might be arranged, he would probably elicit satisfactory answers.

Aarify Pasha also informed me that Musurus Pasha had telegraphed that in a conversation with your Lordship the question of a Conference had been touched upon, and that you had shown yourself far from unfavourable to the idea.

I should, however, be glad to be made acquainted with your Lordship's opinion upon that point for my guidance in any conversations with the Turkish Ministers, who have hitherto shown no anxiety to advocate such a course.

The Grand Vizier has twice assured me that, although he once hinted to Count Zichy that, if all other ways of coming to an understanding should fail, it might be necessary for the Porte to invite the Powers to consider the question in Conference, the Ambassador having shown himself very averse to the notion, and having begged him not to press it, he had said no more about it to any one.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 178.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December* 21.)

(No. 341.)

Therapia, December 11, 1874.

My Lord,

THERE is frequently a very striking contrast between the language of Count Andrassy to Sir A. Buchanan and that of the Austrian Ambassador here when urging me to press the Porte to make the concessions sought for by his Government in reference to the Roumanian Conventions.

Her Majesty's Ambassador reported to your Lordship, on the 2nd instant, that Count Andrassy, in speaking of the proposed Firman, had said that the three Powers could not ask to confer upon the Roumanian Government a right which they considered it as already possessed of; whereas, in a conversation which I had yesterday with my Austro-Hungarian colleague, no terms could have been more explicit than those in which he repudiated the notion that his Government maintained the present existence of the right in question. What they wished was, he said, that the privilege should be granted to them; and upon my alluding to the possibility of this being done by a Firman, he said that of all modes that appeared to him the most unobjectionable.

I spoke of the possibility of the Principalities refusing to accept one, and he then explained with much energy that if they chose to put themselves so extravagantly in the wrong he hoped that there could be no doubt of there being sufficient unanimity among the European Governments to ensure their being brought to reason.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 179.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 272.)

Foreign Office, December 21, 1874.

Sir,

I HAVE to approve the answer given by your Excellency to the Grand Vizier on being asked for your opinion of Prince Bismarck's suggestion for the settlement of the Roumanian Commercial Treaty Question, as reported in your despatch No. 300 of the 23rd ultimo.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 180.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 367. Confidential.)

Buda Pesth, December 10, 1874.

My Lord,

COUNT ANDRASSY communicated to me this evening a telegram which he appeared to have just received from St. Petersburgh, stating that Prince Gortchakow entirely concurred in opinions which he had expressed in a despatch to Count Zichy, objecting to a wish of the Porte to convoke a Conference of the Guaranteeing Powers, with a view to obtaining the Sultan's sanction to the conclusion of Commercial Conventions by the Danubian Principalities. The telegram stated that General Ignatieff would be instructed to support Count Zichy's representations on the subject, that the Russian Government would decline to send a Plenipotentiary to the proposed Conference, and that Prince Gortchakow had reason to believe the Porte was disposed to close the question by the issue of a Firman.

I observed, that I presumed, therefore, the question would now be settled in that manner, as all parties seemed to agree to it, and I asked his Excellency whether he was acquainted with the terms in which the proposed Firman would be drawn up. He answered that the terms of the Firman would be a matter of indifference to him, as they could not change the position which Austria-Hungary had already taken in the question by the declaration she had made to the Porte in concert with Germany and Russia, and that, as he had formerly stated to me, he still thought the Porte would act more consistently with her own dignity by addressing notes to all the Guaranteeing Powers acquiescing in the views expressed in that declaration, than by issuing a Firman to confer a right on the Principalities, which they maintain they already possess, and in exercising which they would affect to ignore the existence of any act of the Sultan authorizing them to do so.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 181.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21.)

(No. 65.)

Bucharest, December 17, 1874.

My Lord,

I TELEGRAPHED to Sir Henry Elliot and to your Lordship yesterday the message that M. Boerescо asked me to convey regarding the complications which would arise if the Porte persisted in giving its sanction to the conclusion by Roumania of independent commercial arrangements by a Firman which the Prince and his Government were determined to repudiate, and, if necessary, formally to protest against. I also informed his Excellency and your Lordship by telegraph the day before that instructions to this effect would be telegraphed to the Roumanian Agent at Constantinople, in consequence of a decision of the Council of Ministers held the same day under the presidency of the Prince.

As I am in complete ignorance of any decision having been come to by Her Majesty's Government, or of any action having been taken at Constantinople upon this question, I can only content myself with M. Boerescо's version of what has occurred to provoke the Roumanian Government to take this step.

It seems that they have received a despatch from their Agent at Constantinople to the effect that instructions had reached the English Ambassador recognizing the practical necessity of according to Roumania the right of concluding separate commercial arrangements, but stating that the rights of the Porte must be guarded by a preliminary sanction of the arrangement, and that this should be done by the issue of a Firman.

I do not know whether this statement of Prince Ghica is correct, but M. Boerescо assures me and all my colleagues that the Prince and his Government, after full deliberation, have finally determined not to accept as a concession from the Porte what they claim as a right, as they consider it impossible to retreat from the position they have taken up before the Chambers and the nation, that their right is clear and indisputable; any wavering upon this point, they say, could only end in their defeat and disgrace.

The Prime Minister, M. Catargé, holds the same language. He takes credit for

the scrupulous fidelity with which the Government have observed all their engagements to the Porte. Finding, on taking office, that difficulties had constantly been made in paying the tribute which was always in arrear, they had insisted ever since upon its regular and punctual payment; they had interposed with a strong hand to put a stop to the intrigues of the Bulgarian Committees in the Principalities; and they had shown in every way a desire to be on good neighbourly terms with Turkey, notwithstanding that they strongly suspect her of intriguing against them with the opposition here; but it is too much to expect them to swallow the pill. If all the Powers insisted upon it the Government would at once resign, and he doubted the possibility of the Prince finding any Ministry who would advise him to accept the Firman.

I saw it was useless to argue the point with the Ministers; and, indeed, without any official information or instructions, I was in no position to do so, so I simply, but strongly, advised both Ministers, not to take any rash or hasty decision which they might afterwards repent. They both said that their decision was deliberate and absolute, and that they would stand or fall by it.

The growth of this difficulty to its present dimensions is clearly traceable, in my opinion, to the unfortunate effect of the separate action of certain of the great Powers, and I think this fact is sufficiently shown by my despatches. The Roumanians are quick to see and profit by the chance of dividing their seven masters upon any question affecting their interests, and from the moment that three of the Powers declared in their favour, their tone and language sensibly changed, and they have since pressed their claims with a much higher hand, and now contemptuously reject a concession which they would have gladly accepted at first.

Now, whatever decision may be arrived at as to the best means of solving this difficulty, I am strongly of opinion that the only way of insuring its acceptance here will be to unite all the Powers sincerely in urging its adoption, and I am satisfied that a cordial understanding and joint action by all the Guaranteeing Powers are absolutely indispensable to any proper and efficient control over the Principalities in future, and to the maintenance of the *status quo* here.

I should add that if the present Ministry were unfortunately to lose office it would, in the opinion of every impartial man in the country, be a disaster much to be regretted, in the interest of foreigners no less than of the country which has made so much progress under its government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

P.S.—I telegraph to your Lordship to-day the information confidentially given to me by the French Agent, that he has just received telegraphic instructions from his Government, desiring him to warn the Roumanian Government that they will put themselves entirely wrong in the eyes of the Powers, by refusing to accept the Firman, and strongly to urge them to reconsider their decision; but I doubt his success so long as he is unsupported. I have as yet received no instructions of any sort.

In order to save time I send this despatch direct to your Lordship.

C. V.

No. 182.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 21, 1874, 10 A.M.)*

(Telegraphic.)

Buda Pesth, December 20, 1874, 8 P.M.

I HAVE just received copy of your Lordship's telegram to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bucharest.

As Count Andrassy said last night and this morning, that the German, Russian, and Austrian Representatives at Constantinople had received identical instructions, if he is correctly informed, there seems to be some change at Berlin and Petersburgh respecting proposed Firman.

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* This telegram was repeated to Lord Lyons, Lord Odo Russell, Lord A. Loftus, Sir H. Elliot, and Sir A. Paget.

No. 183.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December 22.*)

(Telegraphic.) *December 21, 1874.*

WITH reference to my telegram of last night, I have told Foreign Minister that your Lordship considers all the Powers to have concurred in the Prussian suggestion for the issue of a Firman, but he said this is a mistake, as he assented to the expediency of some plan being adopted for the announcement by the Porte of its acquiescence in Principalities' declarations.

No. 184.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December 22.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, December 22, 1874.*

COUNT BULOW says that Prince Bismarck wishes to abstain from interference in the Roumanian question at present. He thinks that it may settle itself if let alone for a time.

No. 185.

The Earl of Derby to M. Cadorna.

M. le Ministre, *Foreign Office, December 22, 1874.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant in regard to the question of the Roumanian Commercial Treaties, in which you communicate to me a copy of the instructions on this subject addressed by the Italian Government to their Representative at Constantinople, and I have the honour to express to you my thanks for this document.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 186.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.[1]—(*Received December 23, at night.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, December 23, 1874, 12·30 P.M.*

THE information given by Count Andrassy to Sir A. Buchanan, as reported in his Excellency's telegram of the 20th, is altogether incorrect.

The Austrian Ambassador assures me that he has never reported that the Porte would settle question by a circular note.

It is difficult to suppose he could have done so, as the Porte has never shown any disposition to adopt that course.

The Grand Vizier tells me he has not given any grounds for a belief that he would agree to it.

No. 187.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.[1]—(*Received December 23, at night.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, December 23, 1874, 2:35 P.M.*

PRINCE BISMARCK in his anxiety to conceal from his allies that the proposal of a Firman had originated with himself, appears to have attributed the initiative to Her Majesty's Government.

A telegram from the Russian Ambassador at Berlin to Prince Gortchakow, shown to me yesterday by General Ignatieff, states that Bülow had told him that Her Majesty's Government, having been informed from Constantinople that the Porte

[1] This telegram was repeated to Lord Lyons, Lord Odo Russell, Sir A. Buchanan, Lord A. Loftus, and Sir A. Paget.

was disposed to issue a Firman, had asked confidentially Prince Bismarck's opinion upon it, and that he had said, while he saw no objection to it, he must consult Cabinets of Vienna and St. Petersburgh.

The German Ambassador has told me the same thing.

Your Lordship is aware that till suggested by Prince Bismarck to the Turkish Ambassador the question had never been even spoken of here.

I told my colleagues that Her Majesty's Government saw no objection to a Firman, but never recommended that or any other particular course.

No. 188.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December 24.*)

(No. 347. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, December 20, 1874.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 275, Confidential, of the 16th instant, informing me that the German Ambassador had read a telegram from Berlin to your Lordship, expressing the satisfaction of Prince Bismarck at the reception which had been given by the Governments of Austria and Russia to the suggestion made some few days previously by me for the settlement of the question of the Roumanian Commercial Conventions, by the issue of a Firman by the Porte. The Prince, his Excellency said, had hesitated to signify his concurrence in this suggestion, until he had ascertained the views of those Governments; but he had now great pleasure in concurring in it, and begged to thank Her Majesty's Government for its having been offered; and he hoped it would lead to a speedy and satisfactory solution of the question.

I cannot but feel highly flattered that Prince Bismarck should have imputed to me any suggestion worthy of being recommended to, and adopted by, the allied Governments of Germany, Austria, and Russia; and I deeply regret that I could not accept the compliment, even if the German Ambassador had not, as your Lordship tells me, called again at the Foreign Office to explain that it only rested on a confusion in his telegrams, and that Prince Bismarck reclaimed the happy thought as his own, which Count Münster had so flatteringly, from the 8th to the 12th instant, attributed to me.

A reference to past correspondence would show that Prince Bismarck's informal hint, telegraphed to Constantinople, had been confided by Aarifi Pasha to Sir H. Elliot on the 28th November, and communicated to me by your Lordship on the 30th ultimo, when I first had occasion to ask Herr von Bülow whether the Turkish Government had been correctly informed by their Ambassador at Berlin or not.

What followed I reported to your Lordship in my despatch No. 312, Secret, of the 30th of November.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 189.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received December 24.*)

(No. 348. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, December 21, 1874.*

I HAD some conversation with Herr von Bülow to-day about the Roumanian question. His Excellency said that Prince Bismarck wished for the present to abstain from interference, Germany having but a secondary interest in the matter, and he thought the question had a better chance of settling itself if left alone for a time. The Governments more directly interested in the negotiation of Commercial Conventions were giving good advice calculated to prevent the occurrence of any serious complications both to the Porte and to the Roumanian Government, and Prince Bismarck, therefore, desired to allow time for those counsels to take effect as he had no doubt they would be finally adopted by the Governments concerned.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 190.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 24, 11·56 A.M.)*

Therapia, December 23, 1874, 6·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

I THIS morning received your Lordship's telegram saying that Prince Bismarck thought Roumanian question might settle itself if left alone for a time.

My Austrian and German colleagues having used almost the same words to me, I yesterday mentioned it to the Grand Vizier. Advice to do nothing is generally much to the taste of the Turks.

The language of the three Northern Representatives has hitherto been very different.

The German Ambassador was in favour of a Firman; the Austrian wanted a Circular note; and the Russian was against both proposals, so that the Porte was thoroughly perplexed.

No. 191.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.†—(Received December 25.)

Vienna, December 25, 1874.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your Lordship's first telegram of yesterday, Count Andrassy did not name the Porte. When I called on him last Sunday to speak of subject of a telegram received the previous evening from your Lordship, his words were: "Je viens d'apprendre de Zichy qu'on va arranger la question par des notes circulaires;" and as I answered we may, therefore, consider the matter closed, and left him with that conviction, I used in my telegram "the Porte" as convenient for cyphering.

Count Andrassy and I both came here on Wednesday.

No. 192.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 26.)

Rome, December 17, 1874.

(No. 138. Confidential.)

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's telegram of yesterday's date, conveying to me the intelligence which had been sent by Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bucharest, as to the intention of the Roumanian Government to refuse the Firman authorizing the conclusion of Commercial Conventions, and a further telegram, communicating one from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, requesting to be informed of your Lordship's views as to the expediency of referring the Roumanian Treaty question to a Conference, together with your Lordship's reply.

I waited upon Chevalier Visconti Venosta this morning, in order to speak with him on these matters.

After I had acquainted his Excellency with the information furnished by Mr. Vivian, his Excellency read to me two telegrams from the Italian Consul-General at Bucharest, the first of which said that the intention of the Roumanian Government to refuse the Firman had been officially announced to their Agent at Constantinople, and to the Consular Body at Bucharest; while the second reported an announcement made by M. Boerescu to the Italian Consul-General, that if the Firman was sent it would be declared by the Roumanian Chamber as *nul et non avenu*. The Consul-General added that he had given counsels of moderation to the Roumanian Prime Minister.

M. Visconti Venosta did not seem much surprised at the resolution come to at Bucharest, but he admitted its gravity.

His Excellency then proceeded to give me an account of a confidential despatch from Count Andrassy, which the Austro-Hungarian Minister had come to read to him

* This telegram was repeated to Lord Lyons, Lord Odo Russell, Sir A. Buchanan, Lord A. Loftus, and Sir A. Paget.

† This telegram was repeated to Lord Lyons, Lord Odo Russell, Lord A. Loftus, Sir Henry Elliot, and Sir A. Paget.

yesterday, but without leaving a copy of it,—in answer to the Italian proposal, or rather suggestion, that after the conclusion of the Conventions they should be officially communicated to the Porte by the three Powers.

The despatch was long, M. Visconti Venosta said, and discussed in great detail the rights of the Principalities to make international Conventions of the description alluded to. The conclusion at which the despatch arrived was that the Austro-Hungarian Government, having constantly contended that the Principalities had this right, could not now adopt a course which would place them in contradiction with the principle which they had maintained. Count Andrassy, however, recorded his appreciation of the spirit and intention which had dictated the proposal.

M. Visconti Venosta said to Count Wimpffen, in reply, that he had always avoided entering into the question of whether the Principalities had or had not the right of concluding these Conventions. His suggestion had been made with the view of finding an issue from the present difficulty, without the sacrifice of any principle.

Every one, his Excellency continued to Count Wimpffen, acknowledged the existence of certain political ties between the Principalities and the Porte,—ties which had been established by Treaty, and were recognized as part of the public law of Europe, and no one denied that the Principalities were in the position of vassal States towards the Porte. He, consequently, was of opinion that it would only be consistent with the public rights acknowledged by every one, and would not derogate in any way from the principles contended for by the three Powers and the Principalities, if, after concluding the Conventions with the vassal States, official communication of these Conventions was given to the Suzerain Power. Whatever other objections, therefore, might possibly be urged against the adoption of his suggestion, he could not help saying to Count Wimpffen that he was not convinced of its inacceptability by the reasoning in Count Andrassy's despatch.

Having seen in one of the telegrams from Sir Andrew Buchanan, transmitted to me by your Lordship, that one of the objections of Count Andrassy to the Italian suggestion was that it would be uncourteous to the Sultan to ask him to ratify such acts, it occurred to me to ask M. Visconti Venosta whether he had contemplated the ratification of the Porte being applied for, as I had not understood him to mean this when he imparted his project to me. His Excellency replied that he had not, and that this was perfectly understood by Count Andrassy. No doubt, he said, the ratification of the Porte would be more satisfactory, but he had not suggested its being applied for as he did not think it would be likely to be accepted by Austria; he had, therefore, limited himself to proposing a "minimum" which might have a chance of being agreed to at Vienna and Constantinople, and his Excellency then repeated to me the words in which his suggestion had been made to Count Wimpffen:—"Les Gouvernements qui auront conclu des Conventions Commerciales avec les Principautés en donneront communication officielle à la Porte en hommage du droit public existant."

M. Visconti Venosta then informed me that Count Wimpffen had read to him a further confidential despatch from Count Andrassy, in which the idea of a Conference to settle the Roumanian Treaty question was treated. This despatch gave an account of a conversation which the Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs had had with the Turkish Ambassador at Vienna, and in which Count Andrassy had pointed out that the Sultan's Government had been wrong—first, in not agreeing to the application which had been originally made by the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Constantinople; and, secondly, in not replying favourably to the identic note of the three Powers. By giving a political aspect to the question, the Turkish Government had created a difficulty for themselves for which they were entirely responsible, and Count Andrassy did not hesitate to say that a Conference would not be likely to mend their position. They would enter the Conference with the certainty of finding three of the Powers arrayed against them, and with the possibility of some of the other three taking the same side. The Turkish Government might in short end by finding themselves completely isolated.

M. Visconti Venosta does not seem to have spoken very decidedly to Count Wimpffen, either for or against the Conference.

He informed me that he told the Count that he always looked upon the present incident as one of a special or local character, and in this way he had hoped it might be settled. If he had considered it in another light, that is, as involving a political question of general interest in the East ("la politique générale en Orient"), he should have been obliged to make reserves, and to have claimed (as he should now claim if the matter should assume such an aspect) that it should be treated in accordance

with Treaty stipulations, that is, by the Powers who signed the Treaty of Paris collectively, instead of by two or three of them, to the exclusion of the others.

I then acquainted M. Visconti Venosta with your Lordship's views as to a Conference, and requested to be informed of his.

His Excellency replied that he certainly had no desire for the meeting of a Conference on this question, which, he thought, the more it was treated as a local or special one the better; but that if a Conference were to assemble, the Italian Government would not decline to attend. His Excellency added that, in his opinion, the Turkish Government had greatly mismanaged this business. If they had been clever ("habile") they would have treated the identic note as an application addressed to them by the three Powers on behalf of the Principalities for permission to conclude these Conventions, and at once have given their consent. In this way they would have completely upheld ("sauvegarder") the sovereign rights of the Sultan, and have come victorious out of a discussion in which they must have known they would eventually have to yield.

I said, in conclusion, that, as far as things went at present, I was glad to think there appeared to be a general conformity of views between Her Majesty's Government and that of Italy, and in order to maintain this agreement I advocated the utmost freedom and frankness of communication between us, in which M. Visconti Venosta cordially concurred.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 193.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 26.)

(No. 143.)
My Lord, *Rome, December 21, 1874.*

I SAW M. Visconti Venosta yesterday, at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs; his Excellency had not received any recent intelligence respecting the Roumanian Commercial Convention question. I informed him of the substance of your Lordship's instruction to Mr. Vivian, communicated to me in your Lordship's telegram of the 19th instant. M. Visconti Venosta said that he had likewise sent instructions to Bucharest to urge the Roumanian Government not to precipitate matters,—advice, indeed, which the Italian Consul-General had already given of his own accord.

On my asking his Excellency if he had desired the Italian Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople to advise the Porte to issue a Firman, he said that his instructions to him had been to concur generally in inducing the Turkish Government to adopt any course, including the issue of a Firman, if that was thought desirable, which was likely to bring this question to a satisfactory ending.

This morning the Turkish Minister called upon me, apparently with the object of getting news, and, without entering into details, I imparted to him the general tenour of my communications with M. Visconti Venosta.

He said that his Government seemed highly satisfied with your Lordship's despatch to Sir Henry Elliot, setting forth the views of Her Majesty's Government upon the Roumanian Treaty question, and that according to his last advices from Constantinople, the business seemed to be in a fair way of arrangement.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 194.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 26.)

(No. 66. Political.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, December 19, 1874.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Lordship's information, a copy of my despatch to Sir Henry Elliot, reporting my proceedings upon the receipt of his Excellency's telegram informing me that he had not recommended to the Porte any particular mode of conceding to Roumania the privilege of making Commercial Conventions, and that although a Firman had been thought of as one way of proceeding, it did not seem likey to be adopted by the Porte.

The French Agent, however, had previously spoken strongly to the Government in the sense of his instructions in support of the Firman, and his warning and language, which was forcible and well chosen, seems to have made a considerable impression, and although the Government showed no signs of yielding, his remarks may produce a good effect in the end when they are required to accept the settlement, whatever it may be, which may eventually be decided upon at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

Inclosure in No. 194.

Mr. Vivian to Sir H. Elliot.

Sir, *Bucharest, December 18, 1874.*

I BEG to thank your Excellency for your telegram of yesterday, explaining the true state of affairs at Constantinople regarding the question of the Roumanian Commercial Conventions.

I have thereupon stated to M. Catargi, the Prime Minister, that his Agent appears to have been incorrectly informed of what was passing at Constantinople upon this subject, particularly as regards your Excellency's action, and that instead of taking hasty and rash decisions upon inexact data, it would be better to wait patiently for the solution of the question at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 195.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 67.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, December 22, 1874.*

I HAVE obeyed the instructions conveyed in your Lordship's telegrams of the 19th by strongly pointing out to the Roumanian Government the danger of precipitating matters or of raising difficulties prematurely whilst a solution of the question of conceding commercial liberty of action to them is being sought for by the Treaty Powers, and as their decision, whatever it may be, will probably be sanctioned by all, it would be most impolitic and useless for Roumania to oppose it. I also added that Her Majesty's Government had declined to give any advice as to the mode of granting the concession.

The Government will follow your Lordship's advice and await the issue of the deliberations of the Treaty Powers with the Porte, but they strongly and earnestly deprecate a Firman being forced upon them.

I explained in my despatch No. 65 of the 17th instant the view they take that their position would be quite untenable were they compelled by all the Powers to accept a settlement so contrary to the pretensions they have publicly advocated before the Chambers, and that no other course but resignation of office would be open to them; and they still hold this language. Upon this point I can only repeat the general opinion, which I share, that the resignation of this Government, especially if followed by the advent of the Radical party to office, would be most regretable in every respect, and possibly lead to serious complications.

My colleagues, who have longer experience than I have, seem to think the Government would abide by their decision, but the wide difference between the words and actions of Roumanians makes it difficult to foretell for certain what they might do if all the Powers really combine to force a Firman upon them; but this I can say for certain, that if a loophole is given to them by any divergence of opinion between the Powers they will assuredly take advantage of it as they have always hitherto done. It will be therefore most essential that any settlement which may be arrived at should be unanimously and sincerely pressed here by all the foreign agents.

There is another important consideration that deserves to be weighed, namely, the difficult position in which the Prince might find himself were he called upon to accept a Firman. It would be a bitter pill for him to swallow, and His Highness has so identified himself before the country with the pretensions of his Ministers, for which, indeed, he is primarily responsible, that his position and influence could not but suffer

if he were compelled to recant his views and accept a Firman for what he has claimed as a right. The vague notions held here about Constitutional Government would hardly shelter him from the personal responsibility which would attach to him for leading the country to entertain expectations that could not be realized.

I have thought that the best service I can render your Lordship in this matter is thus to place before you fully and frankly the state of affairs here, and as my colleagues will probably have done the same, our Governments will be in a position to deal with the question with a thorough knowledge of local facts. I should add that I foresee that when this question is settled that of the abolition of Consular jurisdiction here, for which the Roumanians are most anxious, will almost certainly be raised, and probably by a Consular Convention with Austria, and perhaps with Russia, by which the Government will seek to put an end to a foreign jurisdiction which is most galling to them. I do not know what may be your Lordship's views upon this question, but it is my duty to warn you that it will probably be raised.

I can only say that while on the one hand the pretension to maintain in theory a jurisdiction which it is impossible to enforce in practice, further than by acting as friendly arbitrators between our subjects with the consent of both parties, places us in a position of great difficulty which it would be well to put an end to; on the other the reputation of the Roumanian Tribunals is not of a nature to warrant much confidence in their administration of justice to foreigners.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 196.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 28.)

(No. 465.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, December 23, 1874.*

I AM informed that on Count Andrassy's receiving the first intimation that the Porte might possibly invoke a Conference of the Signatories of the Treaty of Paris, for the settlement of the Roumanian Commercial Treaty question, he immediately instructed General von Languenau, the Austrian Ambassador at this Court, to communicate to Prince Gortchakow his strong objection to this course.

Prince Gortchakow entirely concurs in this view of Count Andrassy, and charged Baron Languenau to convey this opinion to his Excellency. M. de Westmann informed me this morning that the idea of the issue by the Porte of a Firman had been definitively abandoned. His Excellency concurred in this decision, as some embarrassment would have been caused if the Principalities should reject it. The latest information he possessed was that the Porte, for the present, would remain passive.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 197.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 240.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 29, 1874.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 138, Confidential, of the 17th instant, reporting what had passed at an interview which you have had with Chevalier Visconti Venosta, respecting the question of the right of the Danubian Principalities to conclude Commercial Treaties; and I approve of the language which you held on that occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 198.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Paget.

(No. 242.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, December 29, 1874.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 120, Confidential, of the 2nd instant, in which you report that you had informed M. Visconti Venosta, confidentially, of the tenour of the communication made by Prince Bismarck to the Turkish Ambassador at Berlin relative to the Roumanian Convention question, and of Sir H. Elliot's conversation with the Grand Vizier thereupon, as well as of the reply which I had sent Sir H. Elliot, and which were communicated to you by telegraph; and I have to state to you that I approve your proceedings in this matter, and of the language which you held to M. Visconti in your conversation with his Excellency.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 199.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 30.)

(No. 353.)
My Lord, *Therapia, December 17, 1874.*

MR. VIVIAN'S telegrams of the 15th and 16th instant informed me of the intention of the Roumanian Government to repudiate, and if necessary to protest against, the issue of a Firman by the Porte authorizing them to conclude Commercial Conventions. The Roumanian Minister for Foreign Affairs, in communicating this intention to Mr. Vivian, begged him to warn me of the mischief that might arise if the Porte adopted this course, which he believed to have been recommended by me.

I replied that although I had urged upon the Porte, by your Lordship's instructions, the expediency of conceding to the Roumanian Government the privilege of making Commercial Conventions, I had always left the consideration of the best manner of doing so to the discretion of the Sultan's Government; and that although the plan of granting this privilege by a Firman has been mentioned, there appears to be little probability of its adoption.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 200.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 30.)

(No. 355. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, December 17, 1874.*

I LEARN from the Grand Vizier that in speaking yesterday to the Russian Ambassador on the Roumanian question he had alluded to the possibility of the Porte being obliged to invite a Conference of the Powers to take it into consideration.

General Ignatieff having very vehemently combated the suggestion, he had pointed out the disagreement prevailing among the Cabinets.

Under these circumstances the Grand Vizier represented that it was very possible that a Conference might be found the best mode of arriving at an understanding.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 201.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 30.)

(No. 357. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, December 17, 1874.*

YOUR Lordship has been informed by Mr. Vivian of the tone adopted by the Roumanian Government upon learning that it had been suggested that the Porte should issue a Firman authorizing them to conclude Commercial Conventions.

The German Ambassador mentioned to me that the Roumanian Agent had called upon him in some excitement, and had said that, if it was sent, his Government would reject or return it.

Baron Werther answered that if the Prince's Government chose to take a course so little justifiable, they must not expect to be countenanced by the German Government, nor, he believed, by those of either of the two other Northern Powers.

I afterwards called upon the Austrian Ambassador, whose language I found greatly changed from that which he had held to me last week, when, not having received any instructions from Count Andrassy on the subject, he had expressed himself very strongly in favour of the issue of a Firman, and hoped that I would urge the Porte to adopt it.

He to-day, on the contrary, begged me with unusual earnestness to press the Porte not to come to a precipitate decision about the Firman, and he read to me the extract of a telegram from Count Andrassy recommending that the Sultan's Government should simply intimate to all the Cabinets that they had no objection to the conclusion of Commercial arrangements with the Principalities.

In a very recent despatch I remarked to your Lordship on the difference that was often apparent between the language of Count Andrassy and that of the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador here; and notwithstanding the intimation, of which your Lordship informed me, that the Austrian Cabinet consented to the issue of the Firman, it is impossible for me to doubt that Count Zichy has received instructions to endeavour to prevent it from being given.

I subsequently learnt confidentially from the Grand Vizier that the Russian Ambassador had told him the day before that he had heard nothing whatever on the subject from Prince Gortchakow, and was consequently unacquainted with the views of his Government, but that for himself, he considered the suggestion as one that it would be undesirable to adopt.

He had gone to his Highness with a copy of your Lordship's despatch to me, No. 222 of the 20th ultimo in his pocket, and had commented upon it in no flattering terms, remarking that the concession recommended in it went far beyond what was requisite.

The Porte, by following the advice given by Her Majesty's Government would, he said, put itself much in the position of a man who, being asked by a beggar for a penny, chose to give him a pound.

The Grand Vizier was perfectly aware that the object of General Ignatiew was to make him think that he should be cautious in listening to the advice of Her Majesty's Government, and he appeared to attach no great value to the warning.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 202.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 30.)

(No. 363.)
My Lord,

Therapia, December 22, 1874.

SIR ANDREW BUCHANAN'S telegram to your Lordship of the 20th which I received yesterday, stating that the Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs had received a telegram from Count Zichy, reporting that the Porte would settle the Roumanian Treaty question by the issue of a Circular note to the Powers, caused me no little surprise, as I knew that there had been no disposition to adopt that course.

However, I went this morning to Pera and asked my colleague if I could congratulate him upon being able to announce that solution of the difficulty.

Count Zichy replied that he had assuredly never reported anything of the kind, or even approaching to it, for he had not seen the slightest disposition on the part of the Porte to adopt the suggestion in question.

I afterwards saw the Grand Vizier, and asked him if he had held out any expectation that the Porte would send a Circular communication such as was proposed.

He replied that it was impossible that anything he had said could have been regarded as favourable to the suggestion; for he had from the first been opposed to it.

This was, in fact, so well known that it appears in the highest degree improbable that Count Zichy can have reported to his Government in the sense stated by them to Sir Andrew Buchanan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 203.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received December 30.)

(No. 365.)
My Lord,

Therapia, December 22, 1874.

I HAVE for some days been aware that my colleagues had been under the impression that I was, under your Lordship's instruction, urging the Porte to issue a Firman authorizing the Roumanian Government to conclude Commercial Conventions, but it was not till to-day that I found that this belief originated in information received from the Cabinet of Berlin.

It appears, however, that Prince Bismarck, in his anxiety to conceal from the Austrian and Russian Governments the fact of the suggestion of the Firman having originated with himself, had placed the matter in such a light as to convey the impression that the initiative had come from Her Majesty's Government, and that he had first heard of it from them.

General Ignatiew this morning showed me a telegram from M. d'Oubril to Prince Gortchakow, the statements contained in it being afterwards repeated to me by the German Ambassador.

M. d'Oubril reported to his Government that M. de Bülow had told him that Her Majesty's Government, having been informed from Constantinople that the Porte was disposed to issue a Firman, had asked Prince Bismarck's opinion upon the expediency of such a course; and that the Prince had replied that, while he saw no objection to it himself, he must consult the Cabinets of Vienna and St. Petersburgh before he said more.

Your Lordship is already aware that the first that I heard of the Firman was when the Grand Vizier mentioned to me the suggestion made by Prince Bismarck to Prince Aristarchi; but in speaking to my colleagues I did not think it advisable to say more than that there appeared to be some strange misapprehension, for that Her Majesty's Government had neither been informed by me that the Porte was disposed to give a Firman, nor suggested that one should be issued.

I told them that Her Majesty's Government had never urged upon the Porte any special mode of conceding to the Principalities the right of concluding Conventions, but had confined themselves to stating that they saw no objection to this being done by means of a Firman, if the Sultan's Government considered it the best mode of proceeding.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 204.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 4.)

(No. 390. Confidential.)
My Lord,

Vienna, December 31, 1874.

I AM told here that the Porte has decided on taking no immediate steps to notify its acquiescence in the principle of the declarations of the three Powers respecting the conclusion of Commercial Conventions with the vassal States of Turkey, though the Austro-Hungarian Government is carrying on negotiations with that of Bucharest for the conclusion of such a Convention, of which a draft and a counter-draft have, I understand, been already exchanged between them. It appears, however, that the free importation of cereals is the only important concession likely to be granted to Roumania, and considering the different views of the Governments of Cis-Leithania and of Hungary on this subject, much difficulty is expected in the arrangement of details.

A well-informed banker, with whom I have had some conversation on the advantages which this country may gain from the proposed Convention, is of opinion that there is no probability of any increase in the exportation to Roumania of Austrian manufactures. If a transit trade, however, were established between Roumania and Germany, the railways would become more productive than they have hitherto been.

I have inquired whether any arrangements as to Consular jurisdiction would be included in the proposed Convention, and I have been told confidentially that Russia and Austria-Hungary intend to conclude Additional Conventions with Roumania on this subject, but that the Austrian Government has declined a proposal from

St. Petersburgh to adopt the stipulations of a Consular Convention already prepared by Russia, on the ground that her relations with Roumania will require special arrangements which may not be provided for in the Russian Convention.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 205.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1875.)

(No. 369.)
My Lord, *Therapia, December 23, 1874.*

IN a conversation which I had yesterday with my Austrian and German colleagues, they used words almost identic with those of the telegram which I received this morning from your Lordship, stating that Prince Bismarck thought that the Roumanian question might settle itself if left alone for a time.

When I endeavoured to ascertain in what manner it was expected that this desirable result would be arrived at, it appeared to me that it was thought that the simplest solution would be for Austria to continue to negotiate her Conventions with the Principalities, leaving the Porte to protest against them when concluded if it thought fit.

This was certainly not said in direct terms, and I therefore only give it to your Lordship as the impression conveyed to me by the language used.

However, in the afternoon I mentioned the wish of the two Ambassadors to the Grand Vizier, observing at the same time that it would be desirable to give an opportunity to the Powers to come to a better understanding on the question than seemed at present to prevail, and as nothing can be so much to the Turkish taste as advice to do nothing, there is every probability of its being acted upon.

The Porte has, in fact, been thoroughly perplexed by the difference of the language of the Representatives of the three Northern Powers ever since their identic communication.

The German Ambassador was, as might be supposed, strongly in favour of the Firman suggested by Prince Bismarck, while his Austro-Hungarian colleague equally keenly advocated the Circular Note suggested by Count Andrassy, and the Russian Ambassador pointed out the objections which he saw to the adoption of either of the proposals.

To this it may be added that the difference in the opinions of the three Ambassadors is hardly greater than that which is to be found between their own language and that of their respective Chiefs, as it has been communicated to me by your Lordship; and it is not therefore surprising that Prince Bismarck should think that further discussion of the question should be postponed for the present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 206.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1875.)

(No. 373.)
My Lord, *Therapia, December 24, 1874.*

I GATHER from Count Andrassy's language, as reported by Sir Andrew Buchanan's telegram to your Lordship of the 21st instant, which I received to-day, that he had expected the Firman of the Porte to convey to the Roumanian Government, not the privilege of concluding Commercial Conventions, but the recognition of a now existing right to do so.

If his Excellency ever had any hope of this he must have been kept ill informed of the feelings of the Imperial Government upon the question, and it is apparent that the Roumanian Government apprehended more correctly what was to be the nature of the proposed Firman.

It is not to be supposed that Prince Charles's Government would have talked of rejecting a Firman which simply conveyed the recognition of the right for which they are contending; while it is intelligible that they should dislike to have a privilege

conferred in such a way as to make it difficult for them hereafter to advance the farther pretensions which they have in view.

It will, no doubt, already have struck your Lordship as strange that, if Count Andrassy at first understood the Firman as he now states, he should have given such a cold assent to a proposal which, if acted upon, would have conveyed all that he can have wished, and more than he had then contended for.

In the identic communication of the three Powers they merely supported the claim of the Principalities to make informal commercial arrangements, and great importance was at the time attributed to the distinction between these and formal Conventions.

There appears now to be a marked change upon that point, and a gradual advance in the demands made upon the Porte, whose recognition of the more extended right is expected by Count Andrassy.

When I have endeavoured latterly to ascertain from the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador whether, in the event of the Principalities refusing to enter into the arrangements, such as at first proposed, his Government would decline to conclude formal Conventions with them, he fenced with the question in a way that showed that he did not venture to give the assurance, and the German Ambassador, who was present, exclaimed, rather imprudently, that there was after all no real difference between arrangements and Conventions.

The Russian Ambassador, on the other hand, still maintains the distinction, and says that Austria cannot, without the breach of a moral engagement, now press for more than was asked in the identic communication of the three Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 207.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 5, 1875.)

(No. 376. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, December 26, 1874.*

I LEARNT to-day from the German Ambassador that General Ignatiew had held to him precisely the same language as I have reported him to have used to me, with regard to the impossibility of the Austro-Hungarian Government asking for further concessions from the Porte, in reference to the Roumanian question, than were contained in the identic communication of the three Embassies.

Baron Werther added that he concurred with General Ignatiew in considering that such an attempt by Austria would amount to a breach of the understanding, and that it could not be supported by either of the two other Governments.

He made very light on this occasion of the possible refusal of the Roumanian Government to be satisfied with being able to make such commercial arrangements as those indicated in the identic communication.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 208.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

(No. 1.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, January 6, 1875.*

I HAVE to approve the course which you pursued, as reported in your despatch No. 66 of the 19th instant, upon the receipt of Sir Henry Elliot's telegram of the 17th, stating that his Excellency had not recommended to the Porte any particular mode of conceding to Roumania the privilege of making Commercial Conventions, and that although a Firman had been suggested, it did not seem likely to be adopted by the Porte.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 209.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 12.)

(No. 31.)
My Lord. *Paris, January 11, 1875.*

THE Duc Decazes expressed to me last night some anxiety about the present state of the Roumanian Commercial Treaties' Question.

It seemed (he said), that if we let the matter alone, we should find that Austria, and perhaps Russia also, had quietly made Commercial Treaties with Roumania, by which certain advantages were secured to those Powers, which were not to be extended to Powers not entering into similar Treaty engagements. England and France would thus be placed, the Duke thought, in an awkward position; and the Bucharest Government would no doubt pretend that these two Powers should either conclude Commercial Treaties with Roumania, notwithstanding their declaration that she had no right to make such Treaties; or they should be excluded from the advantages granted to less scrupulous nations.

The Duc Decazes seemed to think that this ought to be guarded against by some declaration or Protocol, not having the form of an International Convention, which should assert and establish the right of all the Powers that have guaranteed Roumania to most-favoured nation treatment in commercial matters.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 210.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 7. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Vienna, January 14, 1875.*

AS far as I can ascertain, it appears that the negotiations between the Austro-Hungarian and Roumanian Governments for the conclusion of a Commercial Convention are making very little progress, and that there will be some difficulty in conciliating their respective views upon the subject.

The Turkish Ambassador, in consequence of instructions from Constantinople, called some days ago on Baron Hofmann to inquire whether the Emperor's Government were carrying on negotiations with Roumania for such a Convention, without the knowledge ("à l'insu") of the Porte, and he was told that the declaration made by Count Zichy at Constantinople, in concert with the Ambassadors of Germany and Russia, having been a sufficient notification to the Porte of the intention of the Austro-Hungarian Government to conclude a Commercial Convention with Roumania, the two Governments had already been in communication upon the subject, but that, as yet "les éléments" (the necessary information) were waiting to enable any progress to be made in the negotiation.

To inquiries which I have myself made on the subject, Baron Hofmann answered that the proposals of Roumania were under the consideration of the Commercial Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and that nothing could be done until it had reported upon them.

I am told that, meanwhile, M. de Costoforo, the Roumanian Agent, is so much dissatisfied with the manner in which his overtures have been received, and also with his personal position at Vienna, that he speaks of proceeding to Bucharest to confer on these subjects with his Government.

It does not appear that any serious communications, with a view to the conclusion of a Commercial Convention, have yet taken place with the Servian Agent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 211.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18, 1875.)

(No. 381.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, December 31, 1874.*

YOUR Lordship is aware that from the commencement of the agitation of the question of the Roumanian Treaties, I have insisted upon the necessity of bearing in

mind that the real object of Prince Charles' Government was not to remove the commercial disabilities, of which the importance was so much exaggerated, but to make a step towards political demands of a much more serious nature.

Nevertheless, I was scarcely prepared to find that even before the concession of the commercial privileges, so strongly advocated by Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Bucharest, he should have found himself under the obligation of distinctly the warning your Lordship, as he has done by his despatch No. 67 of the 22nd instant, of next demand which he perceives the Roumanian Government to be about to advance.

Mr. Vivian states that he foresees, when the commercial question is settled, that the Roumanian Government will endeavour by Conventions with neighbouring Powers to put an end to the Consular jurisdiction established by the Capitulations, and which is to them no less galling than it is to the Government of the Sultan when applied to other parts of the Empire.

The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador here has been lavish in his declarations that his Government totally repudiated all pretensions on the part of the Principalities to conclude Conventions with foreign Powers other than of a purely commercial character, though I am not aware of Count Andrassy having expressed himself in equally explicit terms; but, in any case, we have too much evidence that the policy of the Vienna Cabinet is guided less by Treaty obligations and the rights of the Sultan, than by what seems convenient for their own particular interests at the moment, for it to be possible to feel any security that they might not be ready to enter into negotiations with Prince Charles' Government of the nature expected by Mr. Vivian.

From the moment that Count Andrassy avowed his policy of teaching the Roumanians that they had more to expect from Austria than from Russia, it was clear to all those who cared to look below the surface that he had entered upon a course in which he would find it difficult to stop.

The administration of justice in the Principalities is more regular, although perhaps scarcely less corrupt than in Turkey, and it may have become necessary tacitly to allow the Consular jurisdiction in a great measure to lapse; and this has occurred without remonstrance from the Porte.

The case would, however, be otherwise if its formal abrogation were to be affirmed by a direct Treaty or Convention, which could not be entered into without the probability of provoking the opening of the whole question of the maintenance of the Capitulations throughout the Empire.

The subject of the capitulations is one which I frequently discussed with the late Aali Pasha and Fuad Pasha, as well as with others of the most eminent public men of this country, and my long residence here authorizes me to say with confidence that there is scarcely a Turk to be found who does not look upon the capitulations as the main hindrance to the progress and prosperity of the Empire.

Their feelings of independence and self respect are wounded by managements made, as they say, for very different times; and they exaggerate their practical evils, of which, however, the reality is not to be disputed.

When asked whether they would object to the abandonment of the Capitulations in the Principalities, the distinguished men whom I have mentioned invariably answered that they would not consent to it.

If, they would say, the Powers wished to abolish the capitulations, the Porte would only be too ready to do so, but could not consent to their being abrogated where the foreign Governments found their maintenance inconvenient, and retained where the Porte wished to get rid of them.

The Treaties must, they declared, be maintained as a whole, or not at all; and no Power had the right to modify by a Treaty with the vassal a previous Treaty made with the Suzerain.

Although I have not touched upon the subject with the present Minister, the feeling of the whole Turkish public against the capitulations is daily becoming intensified, and there is little reason to suppose that they would be ready to assist in smoothing away the difficulties they may give to the foreign Powers.

It is not forgotten that at the Congress of Paris, eighteen years ago, the Representatives of the Great Powers, after recording in a Protocol an opinion that the capitulations applied to a situation to which the Treaty of Peace would necessarily put an end, and that the privilege they conferred upon individuals circumscribed the authority of the Porte within limits to be regretted, unanimously recognized the necessity of revising the stipulations which regulate the commercial relations of the Porte with the other Powers, as well as the position of foreigners resident in Turkey.

If, as is far from improbable, a proposal formally to abrogate the capitulations

in the Principalities should be followed by an invitation from the Porte to open the deliberation on the modifications to be made in those Treaties, it would be very difficult for the Powers to decline to accede to it, after the formal recognition of its necessity.

Although fully alive to the evils of the capitulations, and to their incongruity with the present position of Turkey, I am so unable to perceive how an arrangement could be come to, calculated to satisfy the just expectations of the Porte without too great a sacrifice of the securities still necessary for foreigners, that the agitation of the question ought, if possible, to be avoided.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 212.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18, 1875.)

(No. 382.)
Constantinople, December 31, 1874.

My Lord,

MR. VIVIAN has informed your Lordship that if the question of the commercial arrangements of the Principalities were to be settled by means of a Firman, it would probably lead to the fall of the present Roumanian Ministry, and that the position of the Prince would suffer if he were compelled to accept as a Concession what he has been claiming as a right.

Extensions of privileges to the Vassal States have hitherto been conferred by Firman, but if a mode can be devised for granting it in a manner less distasteful to the Principalities, it will be advisable for the Porte to adopt it.

Should, however, a Firman be ultimately resorted to, any injury that might result from it as to the position of Prince Charles, would be the consequence of his having, as stated by Mr. Vivian, identified himself with, and rendered himself responsible for, pretensions in flagrant contradiction to his own formal engagements.

The retirement of his present Ministers might be a matter for regret, for, although there is little doubt of their having put forward their late pretensions as much with a view to their own interests as to those of the country, they are probably the best His Highness has had; but the maintenance in office of any particular Roumanian Ministry can hardly be regarded as a consideration of much weight in the decision of an important question of principle.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 213.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 18.)

(No. 11.)
Constantinople, January 8, 1875.

My Lord,

NO move in reference to the Roumanian question has been made for the last eight or ten days, and the Ambassadors of the Northern Powers avoid the subject at the Porte.

The Grand Vizier is not, however, without his suspicions of the motive of this new line, and the Ottoman Ambassador at Vienna is instructed to watch very closely whether the negotiation of the Conventions is being pushed forward.

His Highness would regard it as a most offensive proceeding on the part of the Austro-Hungarian Government if, after the communications that have been exchanged on the subject, the Conventions should be concluded without further reference to the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 214.*

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 19.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.)
Berlin, January 19, 1875.

TURKISH Ambassador is very anxious that Sir H. Elliot should be confidentially informed that he has again urged Firman on the new Minister for Foreign Affairs at Constantinople.

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* This telegram was repeated to Sir H. Elliot.

No. 215.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(No. 10.)
Foreign Office, January 20, 1875.

Sir,

THE Turkish Ambassador read to me on the 16th instant a despatch, the substance of which is as follows:—

"Upon the representation made by the three Powers to the Porte respecting the claim of the Principalities to conclude Commercial Treaties with foreign Powers, the Porte took refuge in her position as a Sovereign Power, and in the indisputable rights accorded to her by Treaty. In her eyes, and in the eyes of all those Powers who are sincerely desirous to preserve intact their international obligations, any concession on this question would affect gravely the spirit and letter of those acts, and, for this reason, they have judged it right to adhere to the view expressed by them from the first.

"Nevertheless, the firmness and moderation of the attitude assumed by the Porte does not prevent that Government from occupying itself seriously with the consideration of the ultimate conclusion which may be arrived at, and which would have the effect of placing her unheard face to face with an accomplished fact.

The Turkish Ambassador was, therefore, instructed to watch attentively the position of affairs, more especially as the Porte was yet ignorant of the line of policy adopted by certain Cabinets on this question."

His Excellency asked what view Her Majesty's Government took of the present situation of the Roumanian Treaty question. I said that it seemed to me difficult, in the present state of the business, to recommend any course of action which had the slightest chance of being adopted by all parties interested.

"The Porte for reasons, the validity of which I did not desire to question, had rejected the idea of proceeding with a Firman; the project of a Conference had been repudiated by the other Powers concerned, and I was not aware that any third solution had been put forward.

The Turkish Ambassador asked whether I thought that, when the time came, the three Powers would persevere in their declared intention of negotiating directly with the Principalities, I said I thought they would; indeed, after the further announcement of their intention which they had made, I did not see that it would be easy for them to recede even if willing to do so. In that case, his Excellency said, "we shall let matters take their course, and protest against an act which we consider as a violation of Treaties."

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 216.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(No. 55.)
Foreign Office, January 22, 1875.

My Lord,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 31 of the 11th instant, in which you record some observations made to you by the Duc Decazes in regard to the disadvantageous position in which, as he apprehends, England and France may possibly find themselves placed in the matter of their commercial relations with Roumania, should Austria and Russia conclude Commercial Treaties independently, guaranteeing to those two countries special advantages.

The Duc Decazes seemed to think that such an eventuality should be guarded gainst by some informal instrument establishing the right of all the Powers who have guaranteed Roumania to most-favoured-nation treatment in commercial matters.

I have to observe, however, that this country already possesses most-favoured-nation rights in Roumania, which are expressly stipulated in our Treaties with the Porte.

Great Britain could not, therefore, enter into a Protocol of this nature with the Porte in view of the question now under consideration; but to enter into a Protocol with the Government of Bucharest, providing for most favoured-nation treatment, would, it appears to Her Majesty's Government, be tantamount to abandoning altogether the case of the Porte, and would amount to an acknowledgment of the right of Roumania to conclude her own Treaties.

Your Excellency can communicate the views of Her Majesty's Government, as

above stated, to the Duc Decazes, in the event of his Excellency again reverting to this question.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 217.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 26.)

(No. 2. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, January 18, 1875.*

ON my return from Jassy the other day, I sought an interview with the Prince, to convey to His Highness the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for his kind and cordial reception of Colonel Morris during the Roumanian military manœuvres. His Highness begged me, in reply, to express to your Lordship his grateful sense of this courteous mark of recognition, by Her Majesty's Government, of any attention which he had been able to show to a British officer, whose presence at the manœuvres had given him the greatest satisfaction.

In our subsequent conversation, the Prince said he was glad to learn from Constantinople that the idea of sanctioning the Roumanian Commercial Conventions by a Firman had been abandoned. He added, with considerable warmth and energy, that the Porte was already aware, and it was well that it should be generally known, that he was quite determined to accept neither Firman from the Sultan, nor an order from any foreign Sovereign or Power whatever. He alone, as reigning Prince in Roumania, was competent to issue orders and decrees, and he would brook no foreign intervention of any sort in the internal affairs of the Principalities.

Although the warmth of His Highness' language was probably partly provoked by some recent Articles in the newspapers to the effect that Prince Bismarck had but to give the order and he would have to return to Berlin immediately, I have no doubt that it betrays his real feelings, which, indeed, he does not seek to conceal.

He repudiates all right of interference by Turkey or any foreign Power with the "autonomy" of Roumania: which he interprets as meaning complete rights of self-government; of civil and criminal jurisdiction (which rights, however, are now only partially enjoyed while the theory of foreign Consular jurisdiction exists); of making and enforcing her own Tariff and Customs Laws; and of contracting directly with foreign Governments Commercial Conventions. In short, he considers the tribute as the only tie to Turkey, in exchange for her protection.

The more ambitious views, which, I have no doubt, he entertains, are checked by the wholesome knowledge that their realization would seriously endanger the collective guarantee which now protects the Principalities; and, upon this point, M. Catargi, the Prime Minister, who is one of the most moderate and sensible men in the Cabinet, has frequently assured me that were complete independence offered to him to-morrow, without the guarantee of all the Powers, he would unhesitatingly refuse it.

I, therefore, believe I can confidently assure your Lordship that, so long as the Porte is content not to strain upon the tie that binds its dependency, there is no fear of any difficulty arising in the East from these Principalities, nor do I think the present Government would lend themselves to any intrigues with their neighbours against Turkey, so long as pressure does not drive them to seek such allies; but I have no doubt that, if the Principalities continue to progress at their present rate, the tie will, with time, become so weak and slender as eventually to disappear altogether.

I have not failed to obey your Lordship's instructions by persistently urging the Government not to precipitate matters, but to wait patiently for the issue of the deliberations regarding their Commercial Conventions; they are now content to do so, because they believe the question of the Firman to be finally set at rest; but I only find myself seconded by my French colleague. The Austrian, German, and Russian Agents have apparently received no similar instructions from their Governments, and seem to look upon the matter as finally settled in favour of the Principalities, without any necessity for further discussion, by the joint Declaration at Constantinople that, in the opinion of the three Powers, the Conventions might be concluded without injury to the political ties between Turkey and her dependencies.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 218.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received January 27.)

(No. 28. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January 18, 1875.*

I INFORMED your Lordship that, with the view of not compromising himself towards the Austrian and Russian Governments, Prince Bismarck had endeavoured to throw upon Her Majesty's Government the responsibility of having first suggested a Firman as a mode of arranging the Roumanian Treaty question.

This was a matter of no great importance in itself, but I am informed that, in order more effectually to clear himself in the eyes of the two Governments, he has now taken the extreme step of begging the Porte to put no faith in any report from the Ottoman Ambassador at Berlin unless it is confirmed by the German Ambassador here.

There is an impression that the *résumé* of Prince Aristarchi's despatch, which I forwarded to your Lordship, has become known to Prince Bismarck, and, although its accuracy was sufficiently vouched for by the extreme anxiety shown by the German Government lest it should transpire, it seems to be thought at Berlin that the simplest mode of proceeding is to denounce the Turkish Ambassador as a man unworthy of belief.

His position there must, I should imagine, have become untenable.

I have not heard the above from the Porte, but I believe I can answer for its accuracy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 219.

Memorandum communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, January 28, 1875.

LE Gouvernement Ottoman abandonne son opposition à la conclusion des Conventions Commerciales entre les Puissances étrangères et les Principautés.

Il demande uniquement que ces actes soient ratifiés par les Ministres des Finances et non pas par les Ministres des Affaires Etrangères.

Telles sont les nouvelles transmises de Constantinople par le Général Ignatieff.

No. 220.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 1.)

(No. 32. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Vienna, January 28, 1875.*

WITH reference to Sir H. Elliot's despatches No. 373 of the 24th, and No. 376 of the 26th of December last, on the subject of the form of the Convention which Austria-Hungary intends to conclude with Roumania, I have received a positive assurance from Baron Hoffman that the Convention will be similar to those already entered into for postal and telegraph arrangements, and will not receive the ratification of the Emperor, being merely of the nature of the informal arrangements for the regulation of material interests which the Sultan granted the Principalities a right to conclude with neighbouring States.

The negotiations for the proposed Convention are now making progress, and it is hoped that an agreement as to its details may be come in the course of a few weeks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. BUCHANAN.

No. 221.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 9.)

(No. 52.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, January* 28, 1875.

MR. VIVIAN, in his despatch to your Lordship, No. 2 of the 18th instant, reporting a conversation with Prince Charles, observes that His Highness considers the payment of the tribute as the only tie of the Principalities to Turkey.

For this insignificant payment the Porte is to be held bound to protect the Principalities from attack, and the guaranteeing Powers are to be expected to regard them as an integral part of the Turkish Empire, which they have taken the engagement to maintain against aggression.

Mr. Vivian adds that any more ambitious views are checked by the knowledge that their realization would endanger that guarantee, and he confidently assures your Lordship that, so long as the Porte is content not to strain upon the tie that binds its dependency, there is no fear of any difficulties arising in the East from the Principalities, but the value of this opinion depends upon the meaning which Mr. Vivian intended to convey by the expression he has used, for if he is to be understood as adopting the Roumanian view of the payment of the tribute being the only tie between the Suzerain and Vassal State, it is too much at variance with the principles always maintained, not only by Her Majesty's Government, but by all the other guaranteeing Powers, for the assurance to be in any way satisfactory.

The question, however, to which I would propose now to direct your Lordship's consideration relates to the assumption of the Roumanian Government that, so long as they may pay the tribute, they are to be considered as coming within the European guarantee extended to the Turkish Empire.

This appears to me a most questionable position.

The guarantee was regarded, as extending to the Danubian Principalities, exactly as the Treaties between the Powers and the Porte were held to extend to them, and the two may fairly be looked upon as co-existent.

There is record upon record of what the Governments, which took upon themselves the guarantee, regarded as the relations of the Suzerain and the Vassal States, and it certainly appears questionable whether the latter can so far alter those relations as almost entirely to annihilate the connection, and altogether to repudiate the application of the Treaties to them and still remain entitled to claim the benefit of their share in the guarantee.

In my correspondence, during the many years that I have here represented Her Majesty's Government, your Lordship will not find a word that can imply that I do not hold ourselves to be strictly bound by every engagement that we may have entered into, but it is not to be supposed from that that I am not alive to the inconveniences and responsibilities which they may entail, and not the least among these might be the obligation to defend the Principalities from attack.

It has, however, become a question whether that obligation can be held to exist after the Principalities deliberately break from the position which they occupied at the time it was made.

The guarantee of Her Majesty's Government was for the Turkish Empire, to which the Capitulations and Treaties applied, and of which the vassal States, although enjoying independent internal administrations, were regarded as integral parts; and it certainly appears to me, that when the Principalities say that they will no longer be bound by those Treaties, Her Majesty's Government are entitled to answer, that under those circumstances they will consider themselves free, when the occasion may arise, to judge whether it may or may not be expedient to act upon the guarantee.

No discredit could properly attach to a declaration of this nature; and Her Majesty's Government would be liberated from an onerous engagement; but the degree in which it might influence other Governments which may entertain designs upon the Danubian Provinces, requires to be very seriously weighed.

It may, I presume, be admitted, that the guarantee, to which the other Powers, as well as ourselves are parties, would not deter them from making an arrangement for the disposal of the Principalities, the basis of a great political combination, if they saw their way to it; and the security of those Provinces lies, in my opinion, far more in the jealousy and rival interests of their neighbours, than in the words of any Treaty or engagement.

It is hardly to be supposed that any equivalent could be offered to Austria which would induce her to consent to Russia having possession of the Danube; and Russia would not be much more ready to allow the advance of Austria towards the last, although even if the latter event should ultimately occur, it is not evident that it would be an unmixed ill.

If, when the occasion offered, France could obtain the alliance of Russia against Germany, it is not her guarantee of the Turkish Empire which would stand in the way of an arrangement; and upon any great crisis that occurs, we must be prepared to see the policy of all the Powers guided by their supposed interests at the moment, without much regard for engagements taken twenty years ago.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY ELLIOT.

No. 222.

The Earl of Derby to Sir H. Elliot.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, February* 13, 1875.

IS there any truth in the report we have heard that the Porte is ready to concede to Roumania the right of concluding Conventions, provided these are not signed by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs, but by the heads of the Departments specially concerned?

Pray report in what state the question now stands, and whether there is any chance of the Porte, if so advised by France and England, conceding the right to conclude Conventions, and, if so, in what form.

No. 223.

Sir H. Elliot to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February .)

(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, February* 15, 1875.

WITH reference to the Roumanian question, the language of the Grand Vizier is that the arrangements between the Heads of the Customs Department might be allowed to pass without protest, but that the Porte could not consent to their being signed by a Minister. General Ignatieff says that this is all that is intended by his Government; but the Austrian Ambassador considers the suggestion impracticable, as it is only the Minister for Foreign Affairs who can sign for Austria. M. de Westmann's communication to Lord A. Loftus, as given in his despatch No. 25, does not seem to have conveyed a perfectly accurate account of General Ignatieff's Report.

No. 224.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 48.)
My Lord, *Foreign Office, February* 18, 1875.

I TRANSMIT herewith a corrected printed copy of my despatch No. 222 of November 20 to Sir H. Elliot,* of which your Excellency will communicate a manuscript copy to the Russian Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 225.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received February 22.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Vienna, February* 21, 1875, 11·30 P.M.

ROUMANIAN Agent considers that, as Austria will not assent to the various products of Roumanian industry being protected by prohibitions and high duties, and as Hungary will not agree to free trade in corn, there is no immediate prospect of a Commercial Treaty being concluded.

* No. 109.

Mr. Vivian reports that Russian Agent has instructions to make communications with a view to renew negotiations for the conclusion of a Commercial and Consular Convention.

No. 226.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received March* 1.)

(No. 12. Confidential.)
Bucharest, February 15, 1875.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that I am informed in confidence that within the last few days the Russian Agent here has received instructions from St. Petersburgh to enter into "pour parlers" with the Roumanian Government for the negotiation of a Commercial Convention, by which not only commercial questions, but also that of Consular jurisdiction between Russia and Roumania, will be settled.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 227.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received March* 1.)

(No. 57. Confidential.)
Vienna, February 23, 1875.

My Lord,

WITH reference to Mr. Vivian's despatch No. 12 of the 15th instant, which I forward by this opportunity, reporting that the Russian Agent at Bucharest had received instructions to enter into communications with the Government at Bucharest, with the view to the negotiation of a Commercial and Consular Convention between Russia and Roumania, I have the honour to remind your Lordship that the draft of a Consular Convention between the two countries already exists, which was negotiated two or three years ago, but which was subsequently laid aside. I may also observe, that it is impossible that Russia, in a Commercial Convention with Roumania, will depart from her general principle not to include tariff questions in her Commercial Treaties with foreign States.

If I am correctly informed, the tariff question threatens to prove a serious obstacle to the conclusion of the Commercial Convention which Count Andrassy is negotiating with the Roumanian Government. I learnt from the Roumanian Agent here that his Government wishes to protect by prohibitions in some cases, and by high duties in others, certain articles which it is hoped the country may itself be able to produce, such as the coarse cloth used by the peasantry and army; sugar, spirits, leather, and wood prepared for building carriages, though they are prepared to keep at low rates the duties on the higher classes of manufactured goods.

To such stipulations in favour of Roumanian industry Austria is unwilling to assent, as it is precisely by the Articles referred to that she looked forward to an increase in her trade with the Principalities; and, on the other hand, Hungary refuses to allow the free importation of Roumanian corn into her territories, or fix by Treaty a rate of duty at which it may be at all times imported.

On my inquiry at the Foreign Office here as to the progress of the negotiations, I have been told that the two Governments, being agreed as to the principle of the proposed Convention, there can be no difficulty as to details, which must be susceptible of arrangement. It is acknowledged, however, that the views of Hungary respecting the importation of cereals, and a wish of the Austro-Hungarian Government to procure a right for the Austro-Hungarian subjects domiciled in Roumania, including Jews, to hold real estate, are questions which will not be easily settled.

Some of my colleagues are of opinion that as Roumania hopes to advance her political views by the Convention, she will be induced to sacrifice to that object her own economical policy in favour of the commercial facilities desired by Austro-Hungary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 228.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received March* 1.)

(No. 61. Confidential.)
Vienna, February 24, 1875.

My Lord,

RESCHID PASHA informs me that he has been assured by Count Andrassy that there is no immediate intention on the part of this Government to conclude a Commercial Convention with Servia, but that overtures for that purpose have been received from the Government of the Principality.

In answer to my own inquiries Baron Hofmann has stated that both parties are well disposed on the subject, and that the eventual conclusion of such a Convention may be considered certain.

The recent modification of the Servian Ministry has been seen here with satisfaction, as there is reason to believe that it will act entirely under the influence of M. Marinowitch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.